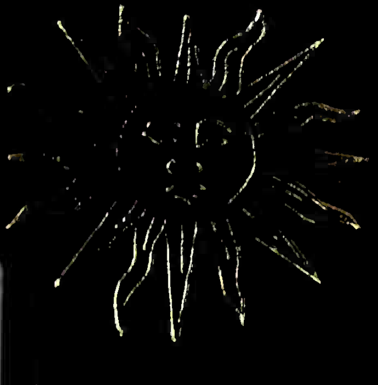

MAN, MYTH & MAGIC

The Illustrated
Encyclopedia
of Mythology, Religion
and the Unknown

1994

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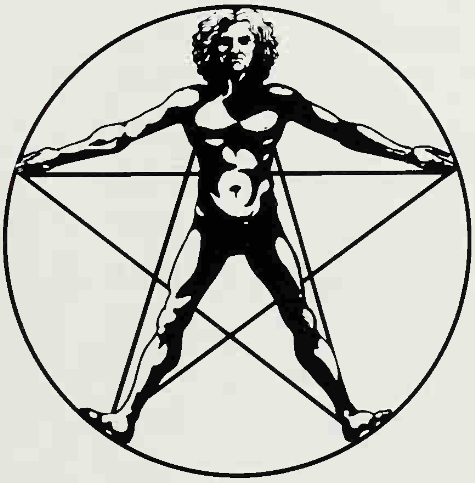

The Illustrated Encyclopedia of Mythology, Religion and the Unknown

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Frontispiece: Carvings on the walls of the ruined Hindu sun temple on the Indian east coast at Konarak, otherwise known as the Black Pagoda; to the Moslems it was an accursed place where licentious rites took place. (R. Erskine Scott)

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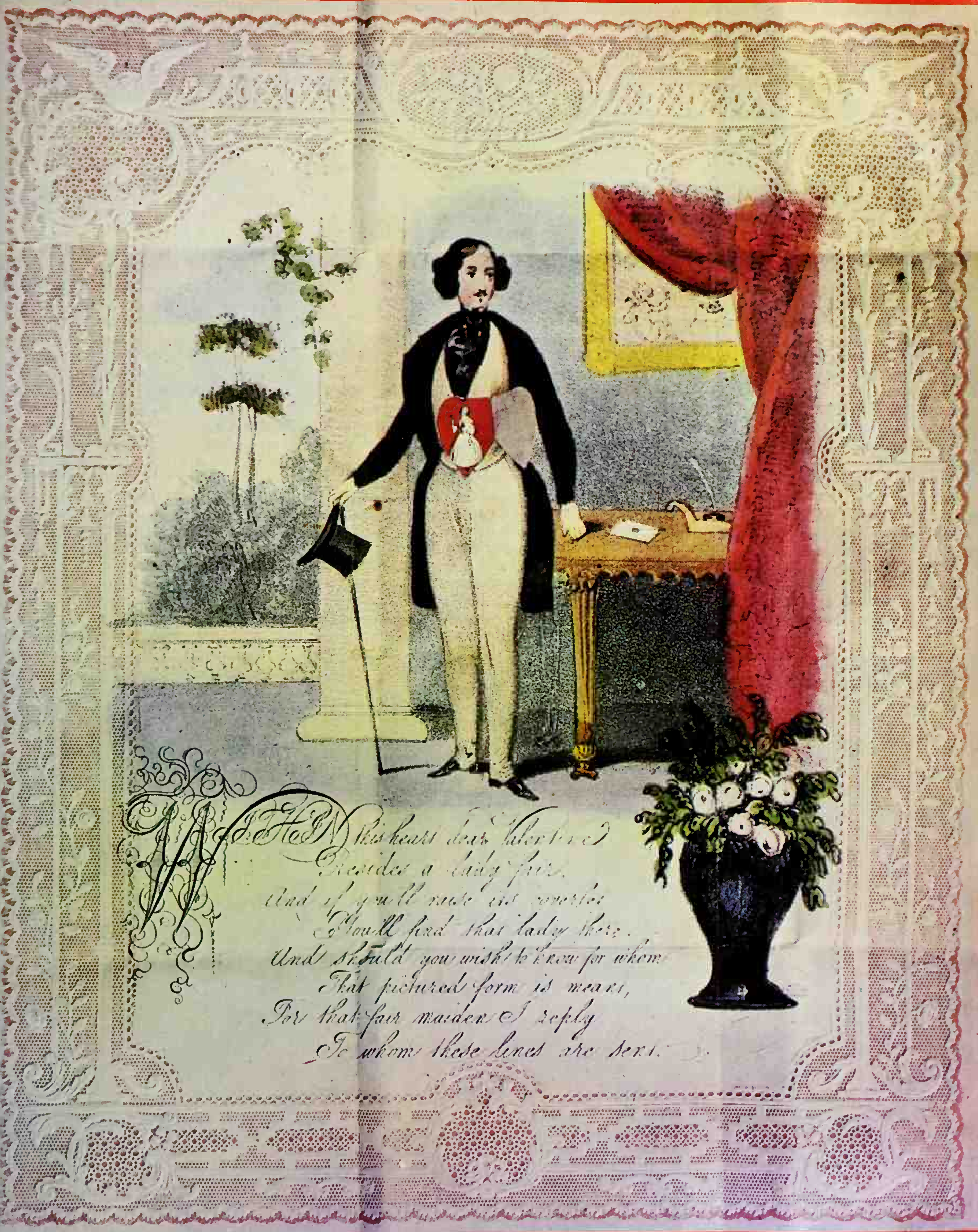
CONTENTS Volume 9

Heart 1159
Hearth 1163
Heather 1166
Heaven 1166
Hecate 1166
Hegira 1167
Helen of Troy 1167
Hell 1168
Hephaestus 1177
Hera 1179
Herbs 1180
Hercules 1187
Heresy 1191
Hereward the Wake 1194
Hermaphrodite 1194
Hermes 1196
Hermetica 1197
Hermit 1199
Hero 1200
Hexagram 1204
High Gods 1205
Walter Hilton 1206
Hinduism 1207
Hittites 1222
Hobby-horse 1225
Hogmanay 1226
Holda 1226
Holiness Movement 1227
Hollow Earth 1228
Holly and Ivy 1228
Holy Rollers 1230
D.D.Home 1232
Homoeopathy 1234
Homunculus 1236
Honey 1237
Hood 1240
Hoodoo 1240
Horns 1241
Horoscope 1250
Horse 1250
Horseshoe 1256
Horus 1256
Hospitallers 1257
Houri 1257
House 1258
Hunting Magic 1265
Hutterian Brethren 1269
Hyena and Jackal 1271
Hymn 1272
Hypnotism 1272
Hysterical Possession & Witchcraft 1272
Ibn Arabi 1277
Ibo 1278
I Ching 1281
Iconography 1286
Idol 1294
Ignis Fatuus 1294
Ikhnaten 1294



WHEN this heart dear Valentine
Resides a lady fair,
And if you'll raise its coverlet
You'll find that lady there.
And should you wish to know for whom
That pictured form is meant,
For that fair maiden I reply
To whom these lines are sent.

Frank Staff

The symbol of a heart is popularly used to signify that love is emanating from the very centre of being: a Valentine card of 1846

HEART

Among the vital organs of the body, the heart, 'that secret hidden centre', holds a supreme place. It has been seen as the seat of the soul, of the emotions and of the intellect; in magic, it dominates the rites of love and hate

HEART

IN LITERATURE, in art and in the language of communication the term heart suggests a wide range of emotional and intellectual phenomena, ranging from coldness of heart at one extreme to the melting of hearts at the other. To many peoples the heart has symbolized the centre and essence of being. The common expression 'take heart' meaning 'be of good courage', is the relic of the old belief that moral courage had its residence within the heart, physical courage being supposed to be sited in the stomach.

Because of its important function in the government of the body, the heart has played a profound role in psychic beliefs. In prescientific ages when occult properties were ascribed to all physical forces that lay beyond the understanding of mankind, the heart was considered to be a symbol of eternity and the true seat of the intellect, the brain being thought to be no more than purely instrumental.

From the evident fact that the heartbeat responds immediately to variations in the mental state, as in moments of extreme anxiety, tension and terror, when the heart pounds and the pulse races, this organ also became in mythological terms the seat of the emotions.

In symbolism the heart shares with the lotus flower and the rose the qualities of the secret centre that is hidden beneath the outer surface of things. In numerology the heart number represents the hidden character and the real identity which is secreted behind the facade of the interior. To the alchemists the heart was the sun's image within man.

Extreme care was taken by the priests of Egypt to safeguard the heart of the dead, so that it might duly accompany the body into the afterlife. The hearts of the dead were weighed in the balance in the presence of Osiris (see JUDGEMENT OF THE DEAD).

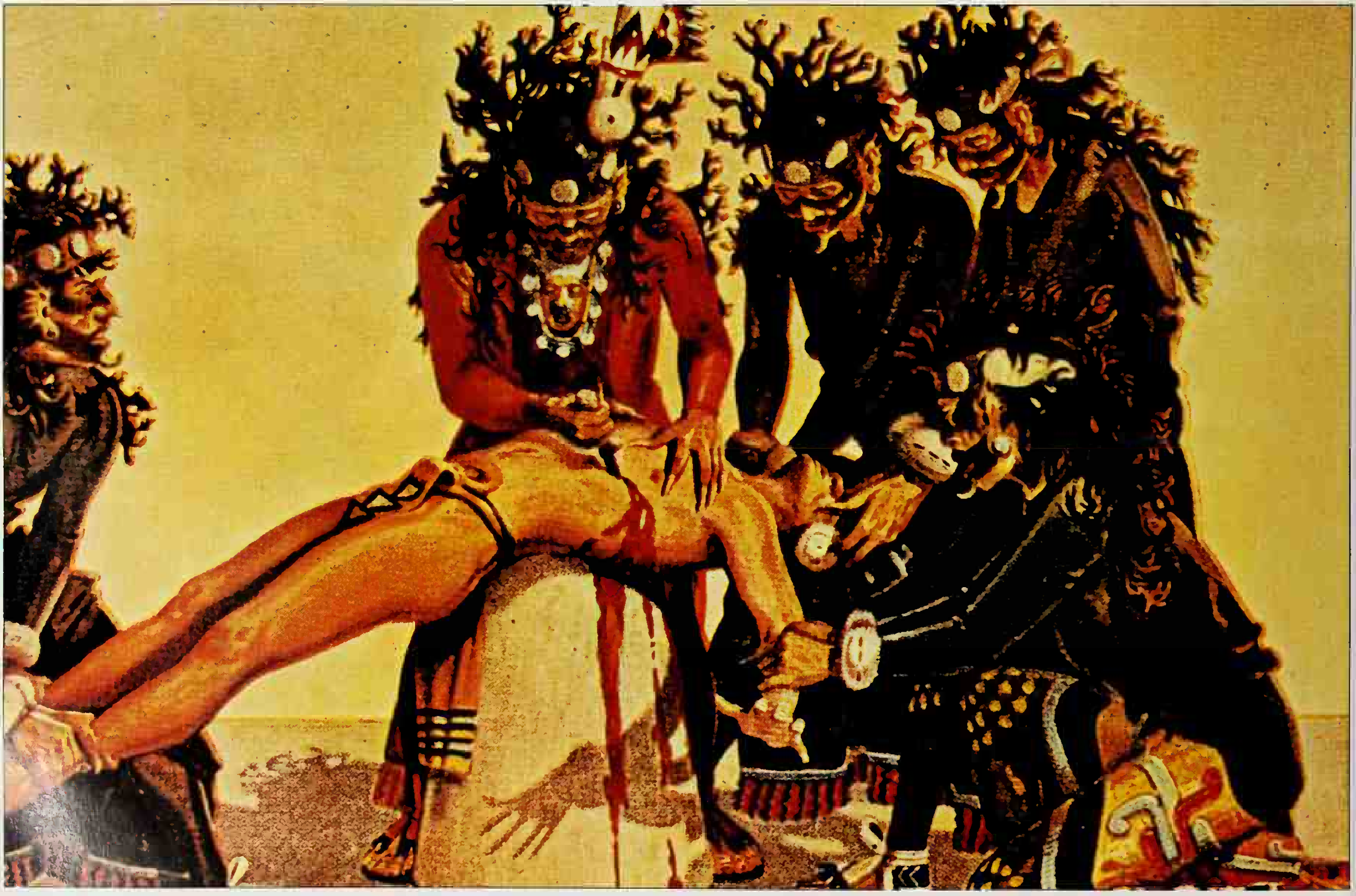
Tabernacle of Virtue

Biblical teaching incorporates innumerable poetic allusions to the traditional properties of the heart: it is the seat of the affections, of the desires, of hopes and motives, of the understanding, the intellectual perceptions, and is representative of the spiritual nature of man. Yet from this tabernacle of infinite virtue it can degenerate into the most repulsive vessel of sin. Michel de Noble, who lived at the turn of the 16th century, published a series of remarkable pictures describing the various vicissitudes which can befall the unwary heart in its contest with the temptations of the mind and flesh, and representing the soul in a state of mortal sin as a heart occupied by a grinning devil, while a soul which is in a state of grace is depicted as a heart containing at its centre the representation of the crucified Christ.

In Christian art the heart is an attribute of St Teresa and the flaming heart a symbol of charity, often associated with St Augustine. The Order of the Bleeding Heart is a semi-religious order established in the Middle Ages in honour of the Virgin Mary 'whose heart was pierced with many sorrows'. The symbolism of the heart occurs repeatedly in Martin Luther's works; his sermon at the celebration of the consecration of the castle church at Wittenberg included a passage in which he says: 'Christ must be sought with a heart . . . Such a request coming from the heart, God will grant . . . Thus He would have our hearts; and thus every feast of dedication should not merely be an outward consecration of a Church but rather of a consecration of a heart unto God.'

The dedication of the heart to the deities controlling the destinies of man found its most awe-inspiring form in the rites of the Aztecs of Mexico, who tore the hearts from the breasts of living prisoners in order to feed the voracious appetites of the gods of the earth and sun. The ancient Maya sacrificed to the sun god the hearts of living animals which they cast into the flames. There is a modern echo of this cruel theme of heart sacrifice in M. R. James's macabre story *Lost Hearts*, in which hearts are torn from the bodies of children to obtain command over the elements.

Equally barbaric, but not without a certain logic, was the long-standing custom among some primitive tribes of eating the heart of heroic enemies in order to acquire



their valour. In some communities in the past, the hearts of dead kings were ritually eaten as a matter of course by their successors. The hearts of animals were also eaten to acquire their characteristics; lions' and leopards' hearts were always in great demand by aspiring heroes, but that of the jackal was naturally shunned since this animal is notorious for its timidity.

As one would expect, rituals involving the heart formed part of witchcraft practices the world over, for by the control of the heart of another a corresponding command could be gained over his whole being. It was a common belief in 13th century Germany that a witch could steal the heart of her victim, replacing it with a bunch of straw. An almost identical belief was held by an Indian tribe of the southern United States who regarded sickness as a sign that the heart had been stolen by witchcraft; to recover it they battled with the invisible forces of evil, returning in due course with a symbolic heart consisting of a stuffed ball of rags containing grain at its centre, which the sick person had only to swallow to regain health.

In the British Isles protection against this form of witchcraft could be obtained by laying a leaf of the Bible over one's heart. This was a perfectly logical remedy if one seriously believed that an enemy was attempting one's destruction by the traditional method of inserting pins and thorns into a sheep's heart which was then thrust up the chimney, to be consumed by flame and smoke. As recently as 1897 a Devonshire woman, imagining her disabilities to be the result of witchcraft, is said to have stuck pins into a sheep's heart while reciting the following spell:

May each pin
Thus stuck in
This poor heart
In hers go
Who hurts me so
Till she departs.

As a defensive measure against attacks of cattle plague, cows' hearts were boiled and stuck full of pins in Yorkshire just over a century ago.

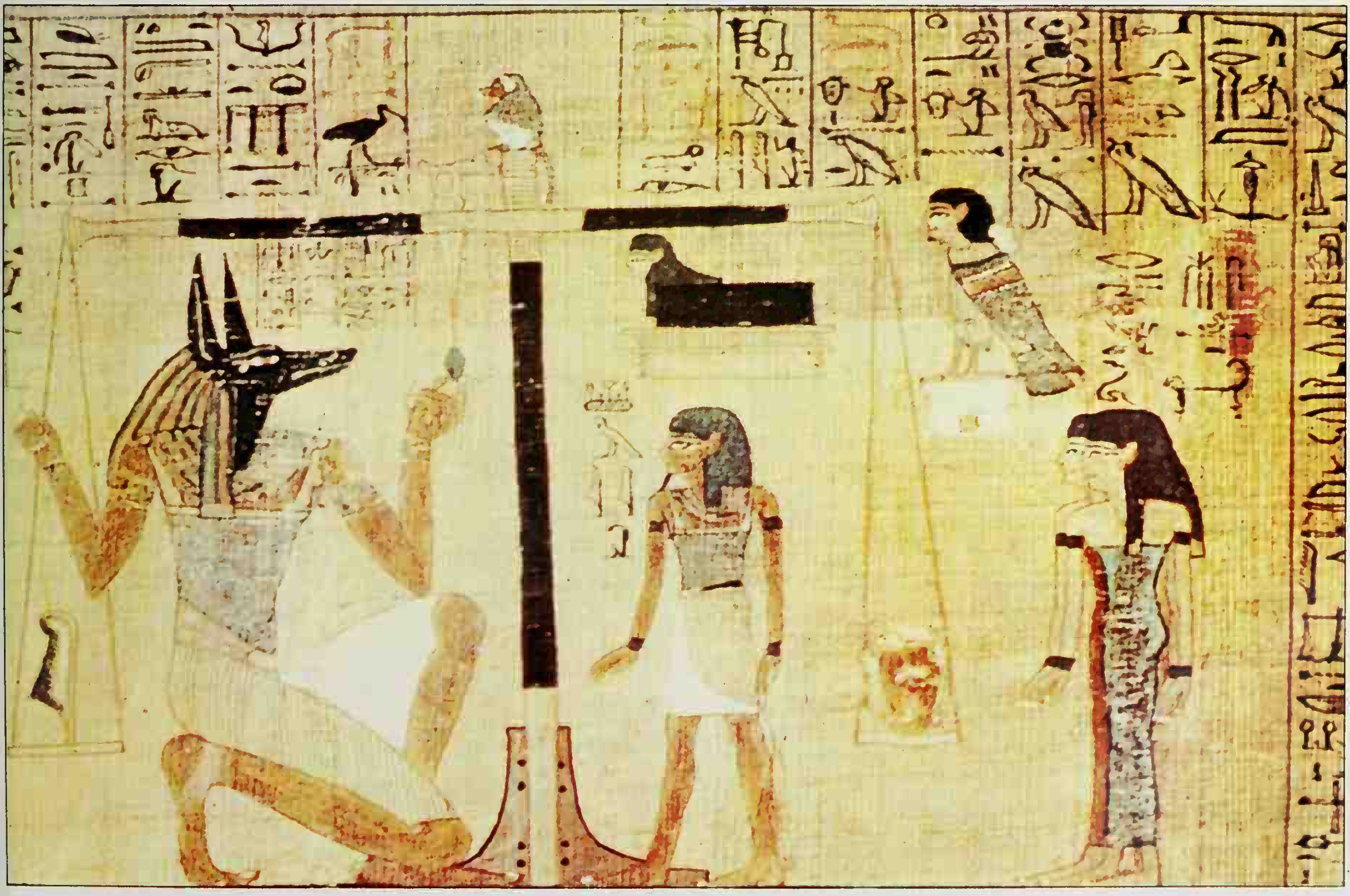
Burial for Noble Hearts

In popular symbolism, however, the heart is more familiar as the sign manual of love rather than hatred, and to 'lose one's heart' means to fall in love. The heart symbol signifies that the lover has become the instrument of a force that impels the whole being towards a focal point. The heart pierced by an arrow represents the female mystic centre penetrated by the male phallus, and is a clearly defined symbol of conjunction and therefore of sexual intercourse.

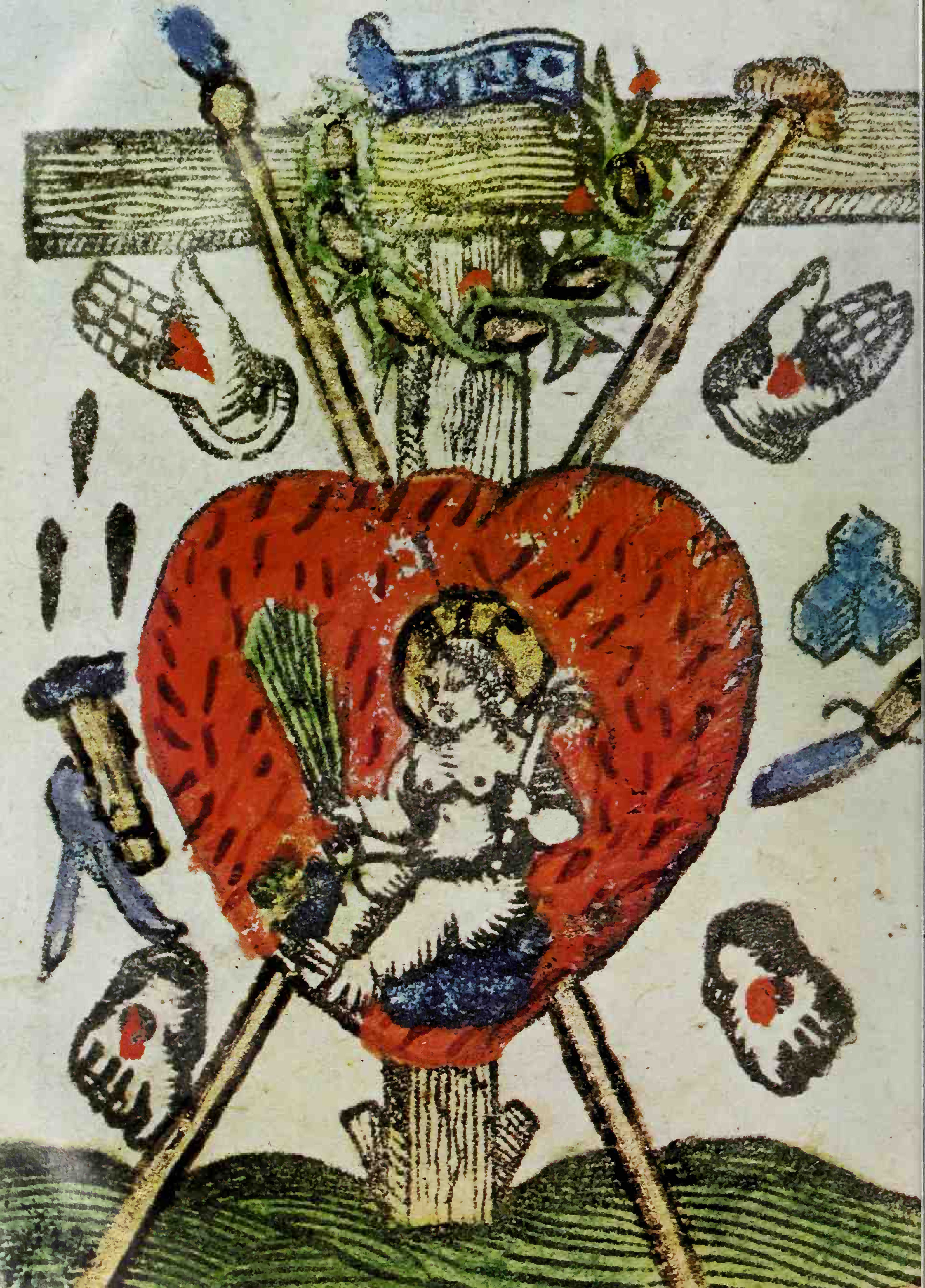
In its emblematic form the heart signifies that love emanates from the very centre of being, the core of illumination and joy. It is often depicted as surmounted by a cross, a crown, flames or a fleur-de-lis. As a motif in art the heart remains fairly popular, particularly in the Valentine card and in the stylized symbolism of the cartoonist. Yet it is no doubt a sign of the decline of romantic love that the pierced heart, while making an occasional appearance on the tattooed torsos of seamen, is less frequently discovered carved upon tree trunks nowadays. In the past the heart found its rightful place as an ingredient of the love charm, and in a ceremony said to be still practised today among young girls in parts of the United States, the raw heart of a chicken is swallowed as a means to acquire both beauty and beau.

Disappointment in love was thought, in the past to be the cause of a 'broken heart' in a literal sense. Stevens' *History of Methodism*, published in the 1850s, refers to the case of a girl who died within a few days of being deserted by her lover; the writer explains that 'One of the ventricles of her heart burst, so she literally died of a broken heart.' While few medical men today would deny the possibility of death being hastened by grief, its association with the physical heart remains hardly more than an outdated metaphor. Great men like Artaxerxes and Henry II are supposed to have died from broken hearts at the rebelliousness of their sons.

The belief that the heart is the seat of the soul occurs in many religions *Below left* Aztec human sacrifice from a painting by H. M. Herget: priests tear open the chest of a voluntary victim to offer his still throbbing heart to the god; the soul then ascended to the highest of the Aztec heavens *Below* The heart of the deceased is weighed in judgement against the feather of truth: from the Egyptian Book of the Dead



William MacQuitty


INRI

Significant evidence of the belief that the heart once represented the centre of spiritual and bodily existence is provided by the custom of heart burial, common in the 12th and 13th centuries, when the hearts of nobles who died abroad were frequently returned to their native lands for interment. Monarchs whose hearts have been buried separately include Richard I ('Lion Heart'), Henry I, Henry III, Edward I and the exiled King James II. The most romantic story of heart burial is that of Robert Bruce, King of Scotland (d. 1329), who willed that his heart should lie in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem. Douglas was entrusted with the mission, but he broke his journey to help the Spaniards fight the Moors and was killed with the heart around his neck in a casket.

The Dashwood Museum at West Wycombe, in Buckinghamshire, contains an urn which once held the heart of Paul Whitehead, Secretary of the notorious Medmenham Hellfire Club; it had been buried with great solemnity in a mausoleum in 1775 but was stolen half a century later and never recovered. Shortly before his death at Genoa in 1847 Daniel O'Connell, the Irish patriot, issued his last request: 'Let my heart be carried to Rome and my body to Ireland'. A box containing his heart was in due course solemnly buried in the church of St Agatha.

The study of heart totemism among the common people has sometimes produced unexpected results. During an investigation into the curious circumstances surrounding the attempted peasants' revolt in the Canterbury area, led by Sir William Courtenay in 1838, the author of this article discovered that not only were tufts of hair cut by the labourers from the beard of their revered leader after his death at the hands of the military, but that his heart was secretly extracted from his body and preserved as a precious relic for over a hundred years.

Centre and Essence

Children, when they wish to give a pledge of secrecy, still say 'Cross my heart and hope to die'; this link between the heart and the taking of oaths occurs also in legends of pacts between human beings and elves, in which the penalty exacted for any breach of faith on the part of the mortal was the forfeiture of his heart and its replacement by a stone.

The effigy of a heart was once considered to be an effective prophylactic against storms and other perils of the sea and for this reason heart-shaped cushions stuck with pins were presented by wives and sweethearts to sailors before they embarked on a voyage, while among landsmen the familiar heart-shaped horse-brass protected the animal against witchcraft. In jewellery the heart-shaped locket containing the portrait of a loved one represents a modern survival of the same ancient principle, while in playing-cards the theme of the heart as the symbolic centre is asserted yet again; according to some authorities, the Hearts suit originally represented the ecclesiastical powers, at one time central figures in the community.

Heart lore also entered into the old philosophy of medicine known as the Doctrine of Signatures (see DISEASE) for some plants with heart-shaped leaves were used for the treatment of heart disease, among them the wild pansy still known as Heartsease.

Language abounds with allusions indicating the multiplicity of roles once played by the heart as the symbolic mainspring of the intellect and emotions. A 'heart-to-heart' talk is a frank conversation between two people and the person who 'wears his heart on his sleeve' is one who exposes his feelings to the world.

Clear evidence that in the unconscious level of the mind the heart occupies a position of special importance exists in the considerable disquiet which has been aroused recently by the subject of heart transplants. There is a powerful emotional resistance to the idea, which is not felt to the same extent towards the transplanting of any other organ. Plainly there are deep psychological implications involved in the transference of the human heart, which has always been regarded as the very centre and essence of being, from one individual to another.

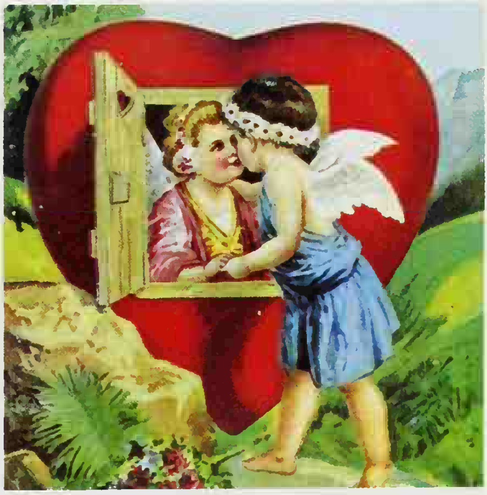
(See also BODY; BLOOD.)

ERIC MAPLE

The heart, which beats faster at times of emotion, is a popular symbol for love *Left* The Sacred Heart of Jesus, token of his redeeming love for mankind *Below* A tattoo, a tree carving, and a Valentine card

John Deakin

John Stewart



Frank Staff

HEARTH

THE EVOCATIVE TERMS hearth and home conjure up visions of domesticity and peace, for the hearth is the traditional centre of family life, symbolizing warmth, security, and companionship; a place for dreaming where it becomes possible, by peering into the embers, to find physical and mental renewal and to discover by signs and portents the secrets of the future. In another sense the glowing hearth is the symbol of the domestic sun, the Promethean fire stolen from the heavens to become the caged servant of the human race, a feeble yet significant substitute for the parent sun.

Basically the hearth consists of a clay or stone slab placed at the centre of a cave or hut to supply a foundation for the domestic fire, and in this form it continued relatively unchanged from prehistoric to Norman times. In the Middle Ages it was moved to the wall, and later still, in the 16th century, the grate was introduced. From surviving traditions and relics of ancient customs it appears that a communal fire was maintained in former times within each village or township, providing the basic 'stock' from which the community drew its individual requirements. This fire was religiously maintained by specially appointed fire-tenders and delivered to each household by runners. The fire-tender's role was vital to the community for should the communal fire ever be allowed to go out social life might be threatened, while symbolically such an omission represented the destruction of the community's collective spirit or soul. This attitude prevailed long after the act of fire-making had become general; and was maintained as a magical rite sanctified by time and by usage. Within the home itself the fire symbolized the soul of the family and it was traditional that when a son broke away from the family unit to set up a separate establishment he took a portion of the ancestral fire with him, thus keeping alive from age to age the sense of domestic continuity. The lighting of this first fire in the new home has come down to us in modern times as 'house warming'.

In pre-Christian times the bride, upon entering her house for the first time, would be ceremonially taken to the hearth and presented with a pair of tongs as a symbol of her new authority. In the East it was the younger son who became the hereditary tender of the domestic hearth. In Irish peasant life the importance of preserving the domestic fire as an unbroken link between past and present was a restatement of the same theme. The turf fire was tended continuously throughout the year as a symbol of family continuity, and is responsible for the expression, 'When the turf fire goes out the soul goes out of the people of the house.'

Altar of the Domestic Gods

Side by side with the domestic and public fire rites there developed a cult of sacred fire which provided a focal point for the religious instincts of the community. Indeed, the Latin word *focus*, from which our word is derived, conveys the meaning of fireplace, home and altar. The sacred fires of the Greeks were under the jurisdiction of Hestia, the fire goddess, protectress of household, family and city, who symbolized not only the home but the earth's centre and later even the earth itself. Among the Romans the cult of Vesta with its sacred fire-tenders, the Vestal Virgins, probably represented a survival of an earlier practice in which the daughters of a chieftain or king were allocated the task of keeping alight the tribal fires. For the Romans the hearth constituted the core of family life, the altar of the domestic gods, the Penates and of the divine Vesta.

Relics of hearth worship continued to persist in European folk customs until very late and took many curious forms. As an act of propitiation to the spirit of fire the Estonian bride flung a handful of coins into the hearth, while her Bohemian sister threw breadcrumbs instead; such a custom had no place in the British Isles, where the burning of bread was considered to be a crime against man and God. However, there is evidence in Britain of sacrifice to the hearth gods from the discovery of the bones of animals buried beneath the floors of old cottages, and coins and in some cases mummified animals and birds bricked up in chimney breasts.

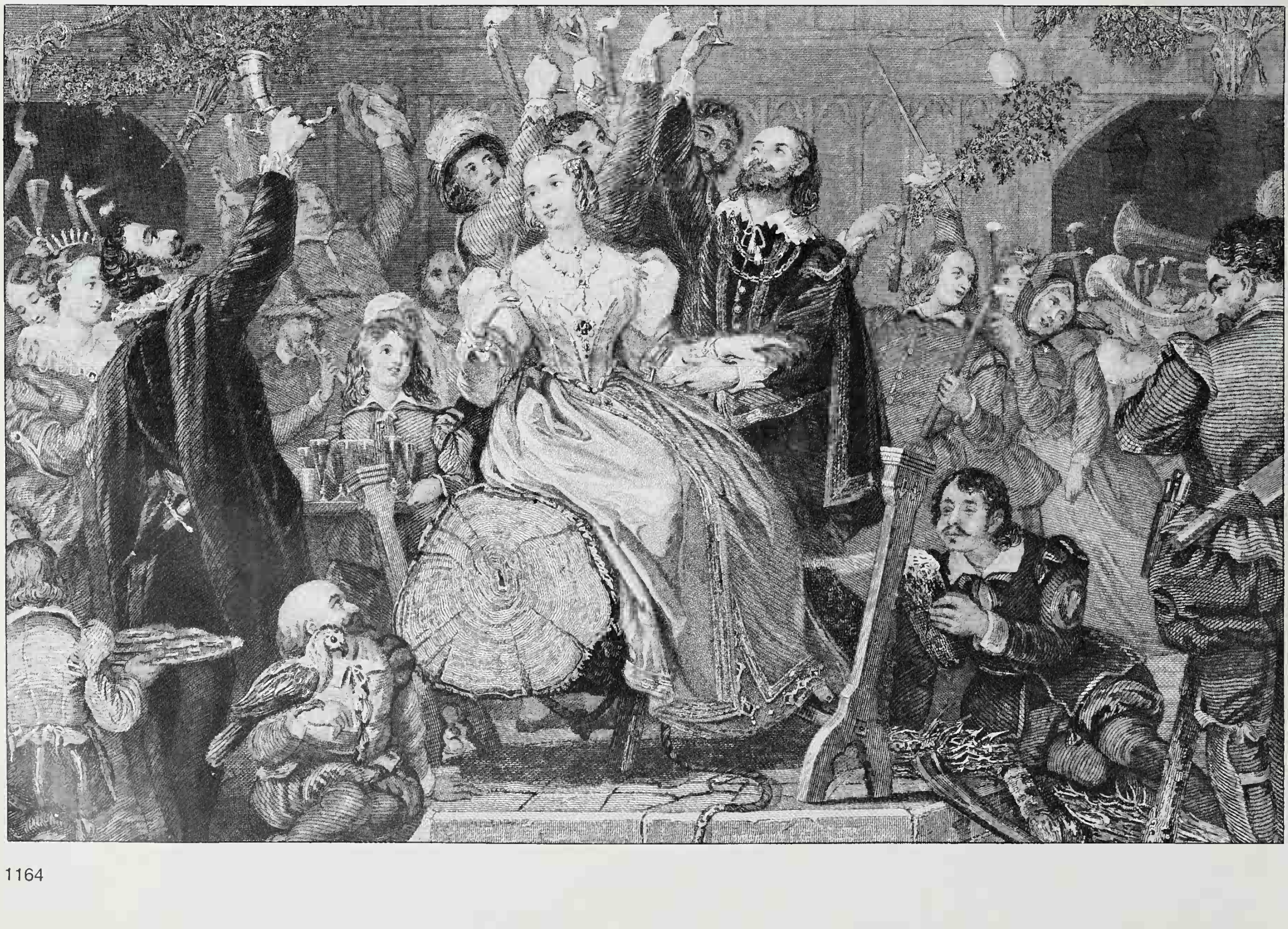
In European folklore the fire spirit is generally represented by the grotesque bearded dwarf or house fairy of about the size of a young child, who often dwells by the hearth and makes his entries and exits by the chimney, and is known variously as Kobold, Nis, Brownie, or Billy. The Irish peasant housewife had as her last duty at night to 'smoor' the fire, that is to ensure that a glowing turf was left burning in the centre of the ashes 'or otherwise the fairies would be displeased'.

There is a distinct possibility that at some period in the past the worship of the fire spirit became fused with ancestor worship. This is suggested by the fact that the Russian household spirit is named Domovik, meaning 'Father of the Family'; when the Russian peasant removed to a new house he would take with him an ember from his old hearth which he would place on the new hearth saying 'Welcome, grandfather, to the new home'.

On special ceremonial occasions such as sacred anniversaries it was once the custom in Europe to light a new fire by friction. This special fire was known in the British Isles as 'need fire', and it was essential at this time for the fires in every household to be extinguished or the spark would not come. Once ignited, brands from the need fire were carried to each household, sometimes by runners, and the domestic fires were then rekindled from the 'new life-giving flame'. It was essential for the need fire to be carefully tended and never extinguished until the next kindling of need fire, if the luck of the household was to be preserved.

An analogous principle lies behind the custom of igniting the Yule-log at Christmas. This log, which was in reality a combustible fire-back, was borne into the house on Christmas Eve with a great deal of ceremony and sometimes with a girl enthroned upon it. It was essential that it should be kindled from a portion of last year's Yule-log which had been preserved for that particular purpose. The Yule kindling was a domestic symbol of family

The household hearth is the symbolic centre of the home and the soul of the family: at one time its fire was never permitted to die. The Yule-log was lit each year among great festivity from a fragment of the previous year's log, to ensure continuity and good fortune: 19th century engraving



Mary Evans Picture Library

regeneration and a time of fertility.

The Vestal Virgins

Whatever happened to other people's fires, there was one which must always have been carefully tended in a little early community, and that was the domestic fire of the chief or king. So long as that burned, there was a supply of fire for the whole people, and there is some reason for saying that it was in a sense an embodiment of the communal life . . . So it is not to be wondered at that there was a public Vesta in Rome, and that her fire was tended by virgins, the successors of the king's daughters . . . There were six of these women in historical times, originally, it is said, four. They were chosen, while still little girls, from families of patrician origin, that is to say descended from original or early settlers of Rome, and they served for 30 years (originally it had been but five), during which time they must not marry. If one of them was found unchaste, she was not executed, for she was too holy to kill, but put into an underground chamber in the Field of Ill-Luck *(Campus sceleratus)*, and there left to die of hunger and lack of air, or be miraculously rescued, if Vesta chose thus to vindicate her innocence. It was an ordeal, not an execution. Her lover, if known, was beaten to death.

H. J. Rose, *Ancient Roman Religion*

It was customary in the West of England to burn an ashen faggot, in an identical ceremony. In Ireland a carved tree stump sometimes called 'Cailleach Nollich' (The Old Woman of Christmas) was burned to ashes in the heart of a peat fire in the belief that it would 'keep off the Angel of Death' for the ensuing year.

At Burghead in Scotland a very ancient fire rite called Burning the Clavie is still observed at the New Year. A large tar or herring barrel is ignited with burning peat, and the pieces then distributed to the various houses to bring luck. Finally the Clavie becomes the nucleus of a huge bonfire of split casks on the site of a Roman altar called Doorie. The villagers scramble for portions of the burning barrel from which they kindle their own domestic New Year fires, while the embers are placed in the chimneys as a defence against witches.

In Lancashire the hearth fire was religiously kept burning throughout the night of New Year's Eve, but not a single ember or lighted candle would be passed to another householder, however desperate his need, as this would transfer the good luck from the house.

Fortune in the Fire

The original connection between the sun and its domestic counterpart is very possibly responsible for the well-known superstition that sunlight has the power to extinguish the domestic fire. There is a suggestion here of a reluctance on the part of the greater luminary to countenance the presumption of the lesser one. In this respect it is interesting to note that the blazing sun was the symbol selected by the founders of the Sun Fire Office. An imagined connection between the sun's rays and the glance of the human eye is no doubt responsible for the American superstition that anyone who looks into a fire while it is being kindled will hinder its combustion.

Inseparable from the cult of the hearth is the lore of the chimney which appears as a frequent motif in folk beliefs. The chimney sweep, if seen in his working clothes, brings the luck of the hearth spirits to the bride who meets him on her wedding day, but only if he is walking towards her; and a 'sweep's sixpence', a blackened silver coin brings good fortune to its finder. On the other hand, witches and devils, those implacable enemies of domesticity, were said to preside over smoky chimneys, by means of which they entered and left the home and from which vantage point they constantly sought to extinguish the fire in the hearth. It was for this reason that the poker was frequently placed against the top bars of the grate, ostensibly to make the fire draw, but in reality to form a cross and frustrate their designs. It was perhaps only poetic justice that the last case of witch-burning in the British Isles, that of Bridget Cleary at Clonmel, Ireland in 1894, was carried out by members of her family upon the domestic hearth.

Our ancestors used to see signs and portents, as they sat by the hearth, and innumerable were the inferences drawn as to the vicissitudes of fate from the behaviour of the fire. A hollow oblong cinder which spurted from the coals represented a coffin and was therefore an omen of death, while an oval cinder symbolized a cradle; most welcome of all, a round cinder indicated a money box. One might even receive advance information of a visitor, for if the fire suddenly blazed up or a flake of soot became suspended on the bars it meant that a stranger was about to enter one's life. Should the coals burn brightly after being poked, it was an indication from the oracle of the hearth that the absent lover, husband or wife, was in good health for the spark of life still burned. To dream of seeing a spark fall on another's arm or breast signified that a dead child would soon lie there.

Before the days of the barometer, fire served mankind as an infallible weather prophet, for in Wellsford's *Nature's Secrets* (1658), we learn that 'When our common fires do burn with a dull flame they presage foul weather. If the fire do make a buzzing noise it is a sign of tempests near at hand. If the ashes on the hearth do clodden together of themselves it is a sign of rain.' Ashes provided an ever potent oracle for these were in effect the seed of fire, a manifestation of the elemental spirits of the hearth. For a flame to spurt without warning from the ashes was a symbol of good fortune. In the Isle of Man the ashes were carefully examined for signs and if a shape like a footprint were discovered pointing towards the door, it was thought to signify a death in the family, but if pointing inwards a new arrival, a birth.

From camp fire to house fire, the domestic hearth has continued to provide a point of contact between man and man. In the course of ages rigid rituals grew up around this most sacred of the symbols. The master of the house sat at the right of the hearth of the home and the mistress on the left. The custom was universal among the Gaels of Ireland and the Highlands; the Mongols also allocated the right hand side to the men, and the left to their womenfolk.

(See also ASHES; FIRE.)

ERIC MAPLE

FURTHER READING: E. Estyn Evans, *Irish Folk Ways*, and L. Wright, *Keep the Home Fires Burning* (Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1957 and 1964 respectively).

Mansell Collection

In classical times the communal or sacred hearth, was kept continuously alight; Vesta, the Roman hearth goddess, was served by Vestal Virgins whose duty it was to tend the perpetual fire in her temple: 5th century statue from the Museo Communale, Rome

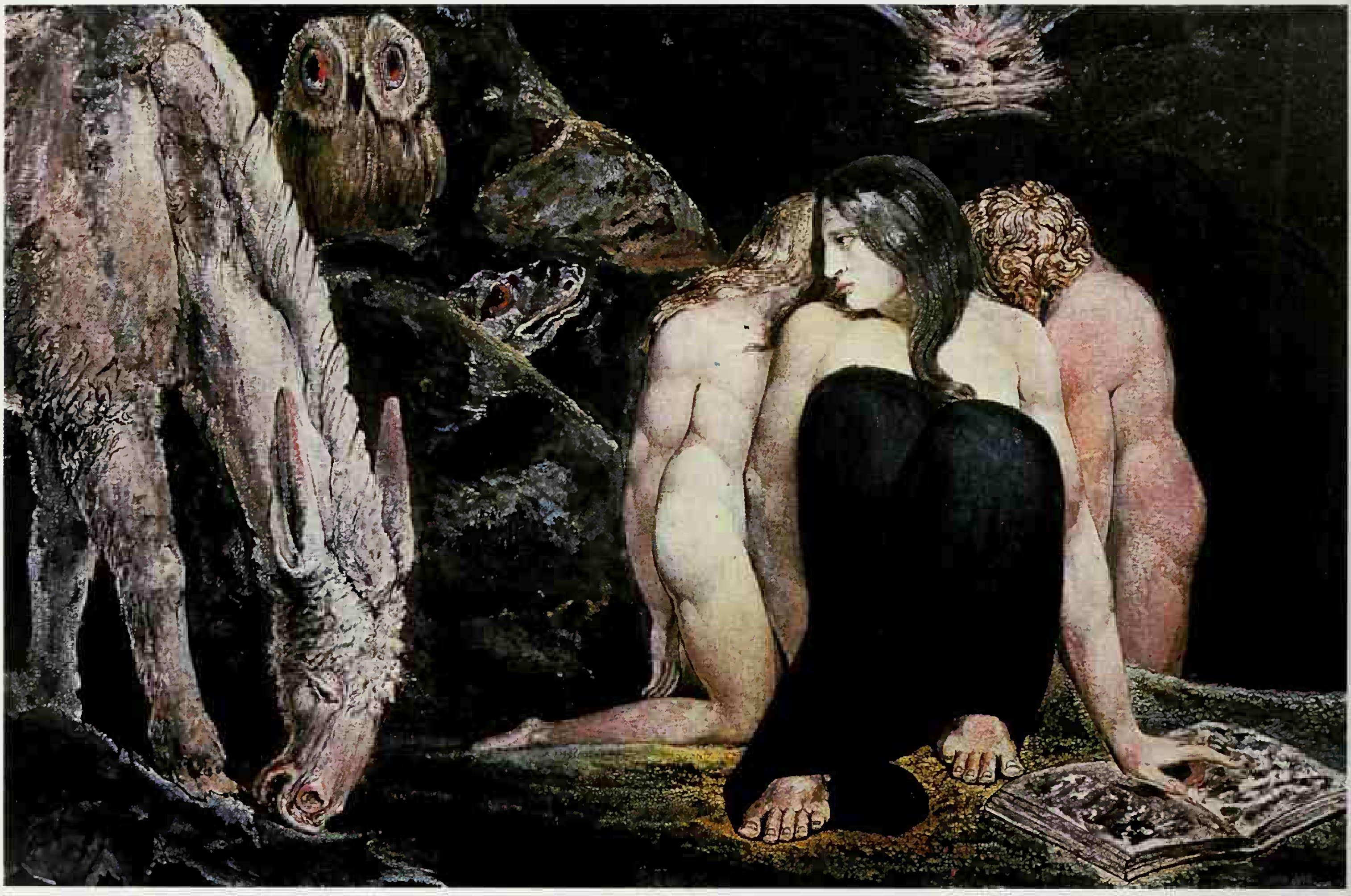
Heather

Popularly thought to bring good luck, white heather is considered to be particularly effective and is often sold by gypsies and worn as a charm: at one time heather was burnt to induce rainfall and the broomsticks on which witches rode to the sabbaths were traditionally made of heather or broom.

Chris Barker

Heaven

The final home of the righteous after death: the joy of the Christian heaven consists in being eternally close to God; in Valhalla, the paradise of the Norsemen, warriors engaged in tournaments during the day and feasted at night: the Egyptian dead were thought to live in eternal happiness with the sun god or to be ritually assimilated to the god Osiris: the Mohammedan paradise contained the beautiful black-eyed houris to serve the pleasures of the faithful. See PARADISE.



The Greek goddess Hecate, mistress of ghosts and spectres and of everything dark and uncanny, is shown in a painting by William Blake in company with nightmarish, eerie creatures

Heralded by wolves, she journeys through the night with a band of uncanny followers, terrifying the unwary traveller; because of her association with the underworld, the goddess Hecate's aid is often enlisted by sorcerers, black magicians and necromancers

HECATE

A MINOR GODDESS of the Greek pantheon, Hecate was not a true Olympian. But she was the most important representative of the uncanny, a powerful figure in the kind of popular and private belief that is ignored in Homer. Indeed she is not mentioned in the *Iliad* or in the *Odyssey* or in fragments of heroic epic. If her name is Greek, it is the feminine form of the epithet *hekatos*, which as applied to Apollo means 'far shooting' but might in her case mean merely 'distant' or 'remote'. She has connections with Apollo's sister Artemis, also an archer, and she may share with Artemis a common origin in Asia Minor.

The earliest full account of her is in Hesiod's *Theogony* (c 8th century). Most scholars consider this an interpolation, though an early one, interesting in its own right. Most recently it has been argued by M. L. West that it is on the contrary a personal confession of faith by Hesiod, who was less interested in his other deities. In this passage Hecate is said to be daughter of the Titan Perses by Asteria who was sister of Leto, the mother of Apollo and Artemis. 'Zeus honoured Hecate above all and gave her glorious gifts, to have a portion in the earth and in the unharvested sea'; she thus has a portion or a footing in earth, in heaven and in the sea, and is invoked by any who make sacrifices to the gods. Those whose prayers she receives favourably achieve great honour and wealth. Though she had been among the Titans defeated by the gods, Zeus did her no violence and she continued to be honoured on Olympus. She sits by kings in judgement, helps speakers in the assembly and gives victory and glory in war to those whom she favours. She is a helper in games, in sea-fishing and in cattle-breeding. She is appointed by Zeus to be nurse of the young.

In strong contrast to this dignified, universal and wholly anthropomorphic goddess stands the figure presented in nearly all the other references. Her special connection with the underworld appears in the Homeric Hymn to Demeter where she alone, except for the sun god Helios, hears the cry of Persephone as she is carried off by Pluto to Hades. By the end of the 5th century BC literature presents her in her usual character, which must have been much older in common belief, as the mistress of ghosts and spectres and of everything dark and uncanny. She appears sometimes with the title of *antaia* (she who meets), since travellers or walkers by night might meet her in lonely places as a terrifying apparition. In this aspect she was also called *einodia* (the goddess who appears on the way), once apparently a name for a goddess in her own right, and *triodos* or *trioditis* (the goddess of parting ways). She is in many scattered references connected with the ghosts of suicides or of those who had died untimely, who could join her host of uncanny followers at night. Her favourite animal was the dog, which was often sacrificed to her. She was even reckoned the mother of the monster Scylla with her many dogs' heads; she could send up ghosts from Hades, drive people mad, and cause epilepsy by her assaults. She is associated with sorcery and black magic, and in the *Argonautica* of Apollonius, the sorceress Medea shows her beloved Jason how to win Hecate's aid by a sacrifice.

Medea instructs Jason to bathe in the river and then, alone and clothed in dusky raiment, to dig a round pit. In the pit he is to kill a ewe and sacrifice it whole on a heap of faggots and to propitiate Hecate he must pour on honey from a goblet. He must then retreat from the pyre and not turn back when he hears the sound of feet or the baying of hounds, or he will spoil the rites and may even not return to his comrades. Jason carries out these instructions, wearing a robe given to him by his former lover, queen Hypsipyle of Lemnos. He pours mixed libations on the victim as it lies on the faggots, calling on Hecate under the name of Brimo (Mighty One) to be his helper in the ordeal which faces him, of yoking the fire-breathing bulls of Aeetes. When he steps back, Hecate, who has heard the invocation in her cave, comes to receive the offering. Round her head is a garland of oak leaves, among which are fearful snakes. There is a gleam of innumerable torches and shrill howling from her infernal hounds. The ground trembles at her tread and the river nymphs cry shrill.

Queen of the Ghosts

Hence we find a grim and fantastic Hekate who is queen of the ghosts, and therefore of all manner of magic, the blacker the better. In this capacity she is also goddess of the cross-roads . . . for cross-roads are great centres of ghostly and magical activity in wellnigh all countries. It is apparently for this reason that her statues are often triple, so that she may look down all three at once of the roads which meet at the point where she stands. At this uncanny spot, then, offerings of food for Hekate were commonly placed . . . and here the goddess was believed on occasion to appear, especially by night, in terrible aspect . . .

H. J. Rose *A Handbook of Greek Mythology*

She Who Makes Dogs Shiver

In Theocritus Simaetha weaves a love spell to win back her faithless lover, in the course of which she prays to Hecate of the underworld 'before whom even the dogs stand shivering as she comes over the graves of the dead and the dark blood' to make her drugs potent. In Lycophron's *Alexandra* Cassandra prophesies that Hecuba will be turned to a dog, will be stoned to death and will then become one of the hounds of Hecate, terrifying with her baying all who will not worship the image of the goddess. Ulysses, who will lead the stoning, will later on his wanderings be forced to build a cenotaph to Hecuba in Sicily, fearing the anger of the three-necked goddess.

So too in Virgil's *Aeneid* Aeneas is instructed by the Sibyl to invoke Hecate for her necessary help if he is to be admitted to the underworld, and Hecate's coming is attended by the howling of wolves and the trembling of the ground. In Ovid's *Metamorphoses* Hecate is one of the powers invoked by Medea to help in rejuvenating Aeson by magical rites. In Lucian's *Philopseudes* (*The Liar*) Hecate is raised to bring with her Chrysis, who had been the lover of Glaucias. But she disappears at dawn with Chrysis and all her infernal spectres. From these passages it is clear that Hecate's help was needed in many forms of magic, particularly of black magic, including necromancy.

Hecate seems to have originated in Caria, in the south-west corner of Asia Minor, where Greek personal names based on hers, such as Hecataeus, were most common. The boundary between her and Artemis is not always easy to define, particularly because both have some connection with the moon, but in Homer and in the more accepted mythology the two goddesses have different places in the divine genealogies. The explanation of this affinity between dark and infernal Hecate and bright Artemis who may not stay in the presence of death, is no doubt historical. Artemis herself in some cults was savage and in Ephesus had many breasts, like a mother goddess. The Greek imagination, so productive of myths like later philosophical thought, was increasingly given to clear distinctions and definitions. Natural forces and phenomena which even for us have contrasted aspects, were personified in ancient myth in deities that had often contradictory natures. In Greek myth the contradictory aspects of a great Nature goddess were developed into distinct goddesses, rather as white light is broken into component coloured rays by the spectroscope. One of these aspects was Hecate, who retained primitive characteristics. Thus in the Orphic *Argonautica* of the 3rd century AD she still appears with three heads, on the left that of a maned horse, in the middle that of a savage snake, on the right that of a frenzied bitch.

Statues or other representations of her with three heads or three bodies joined back to back, facing three ways, appear only late in Greek art, but must represent an ancient conception. The threefold aspect of Hecate, however represented, is clearly an antique notion, recalling that of savage idols as depicted in other mythologies and traditions of art.

E. D. PHILLIPS

FURTHER READING: M. P. Nilsson, *History of Greek Religion* (Greenwood, 1980).

Sonia Halliday

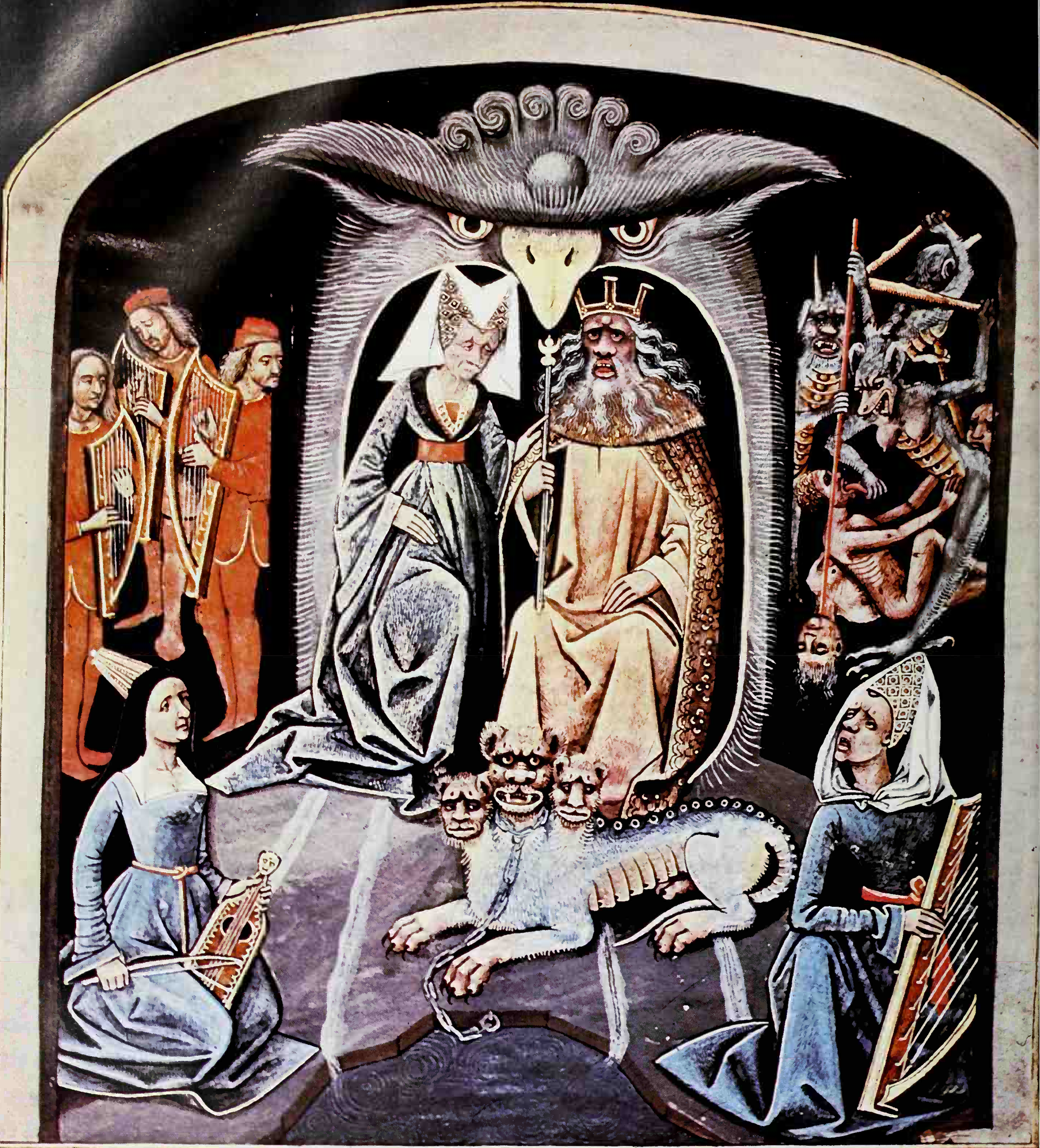
Hegira

Arabic meaning 'the departure', marking the occasion of Mohammed's flight from Mecca to Medina in 622 AD to escape his persecutors who were conspiring against him: the term also signifies the beginning of the Mohammedan era from which Moslem dating commences, in the same way as the Christian calendar is reckoned from the birth of Christ. See MOHAMMED.

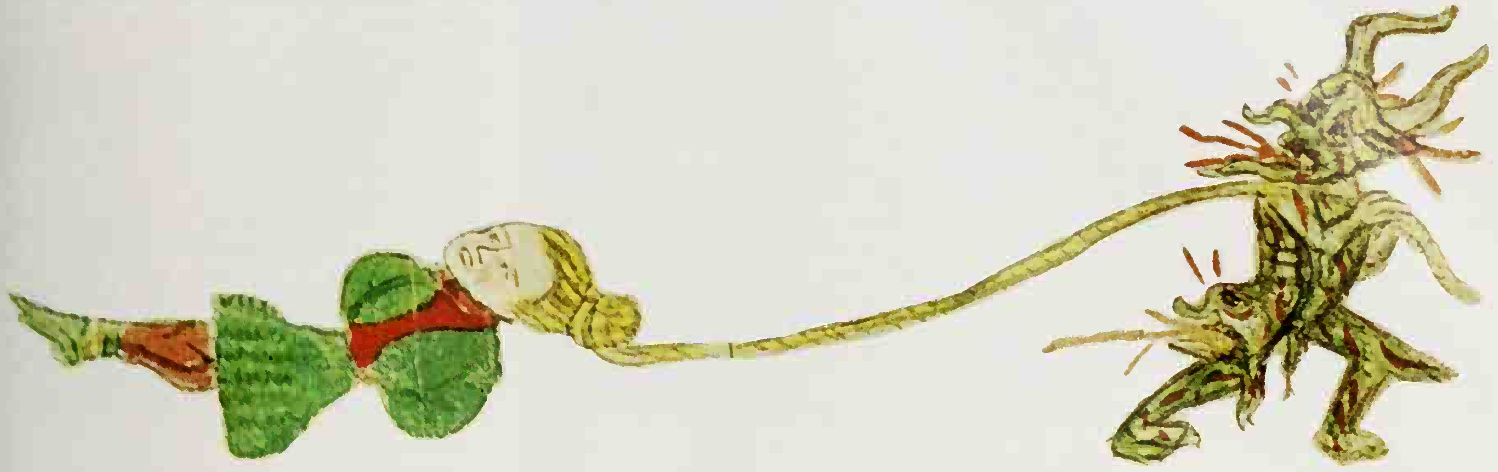
Villa Giulia Museum

Helen of Troy

According to Greek mythology, the most beautiful woman in the world: daughter of the mortal Leda and the god Zeus in the guise of a swan: her beauty attracted all the princes of Greece and to avoid strife her foster-father made the suitors vow to defend the chosen husband against anyone who resented his good fortune; she married Menelaus, and on her abduction by Paris, the former suitors stood by their oaths and besieged Troy: Helen reappears in some of the Faust stories of the Middle Ages. See FAUST; SIMON MAGUS; TROY.



HELL



Det Kongelige Bibliotek Copenhagen

The cold darkness of the grave, reflected in early ideas of the underworld, turned in Judaism and Christianity into a hell of eternal fiery torment for the wicked

'Oh, you knotty, rugged, proud piece of flesh! You stony, rocky, flinty hard-heart, what wilt thou do when thou art roaring amongst the damned?' Bellowed by a hellfire preacher of the 17th century, the question frightened a ten-year-old boy named John Rogers half out of his wits, and he went to sleep every night with his hands in an anxiously prayerful attitude in case the demons came to fetch him. Ola Elizabeth Winslow quotes the story in her life of John Bunyan, who as a boy was so haunted by nightmares of hell that he wished he was a devil himself, on the principle that it would be better to be a torturer than one of the tortured. Another famous preacher of the day, Vavasor Powell, traced his conversion to a bout of toothache which caused him to wonder, if the temporary pain of toothache was so hard to bear, what would the eternal agony of hell be like?

At this period the established doctrine of hell was beginning to be challenged, though rarely in public because those who disbelieved in it considered the threat of hell the supreme deterrent to atheism, immorality and crime. But hell kept its hold on most Christians, though with steadily weakening force in succeeding generations, into this century. In 1916 James Joyce published, in *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, one of the most powerful descriptions of the horrors of hell ever written, based on what he had been taught at a Roman Catholic school in Ireland. And on the Protestant front, fundamentalist hellfire preaching is by no means extinct.

Hell retained its long grip on the Christian mind because its existence is stated in the New Testament, because of its supposed value as a deterrent, and because of the common human observation that in this life the wicked flourish while the good suffer, with the consequent demand for rewards and punishments to right the balance in the life to come. In descriptions of hell, much ingenuity was frequently devoted to making the punishment fit the crime.

In addition, though to explain belief in hell solely in terms of sado-masochism is to oversimplify, there is no mistaking the lip-licking avidity with which its torments were relished. For hundreds of years the 'dooms', horribly imaginative pictures of the tortures to come, were carved and painted on the walls of churches to warn unbelievers and sinners. The *Apocalypse of Peter* of the early 2nd century, which ranked second in popularity among Christians only to the beauties and terrors of the Book of Revelation itself, described the 'place of punishment':

> And some were there hanging by their tongues; and these were they that blasphemed the way of righteousness, and under them was laid fire flaming and tormenting them . . . And there were also others, women hanged by their hair above that mire which boiled up; and these were they that adorned themselves for adultery . . . And in another place were gravelstones sharper than swords or any spit, heated with fire, and men and women clad in filthy rags rolled upon them in torment. And these were they that were rich and trusted in their riches . . . Beside them shall be girls clad in darkness for a garment, and they shall be sore chastised and their flesh shall be torn in pieces. These are they that kept not their virginity until they were given in marriage . . .

The medieval picture of hell, a gigantic concentration camp of appalling fiery heat far underground, with its entrances through volcanoes like Etna (or through the gaping mouth of Leviathan, the terrible dragon of the Old Testament) hit on something very close to geological truth, as Jacquetta Hawkes has pointed out (in *A Land*) for beneath the earth's surface the rock substance is molten with heat. 'Only a score of miles below the surface on which we walk the crust is molten . . . we do in fact maintain our fragile lives on a wafer balanced between a hellish morass and unlimited space.' It also hit on a psychological truth, for accounts of hell closely resemble some visionary experiences, and some states of mind induced by drugs or by mental illness.

Prehistoric burials suggest that the earliest human beings were believers in some sort of existence after death; and the custom of burying the remains in the earth suggests the belief that the dead lived on underground (see CULT OF THE DEAD; EARTH). Depictions of headless figures, if they represent the spirits of people who had been beheaded in life, may contain the glimmerings of the idea that what happened to a man while he was alive would affect him after he was dead. The headless figures attacked by huge black vultures at Catal Hüyük may even, at a guess, represent the wicked being punished after death (see HEADLESS SPIRITS).

Land of No Return

The earliest people who definitely believed in a judgement after death, with rewards and punishments, were the Egyptians (see BOOK OF THE DEAD; EGYPT) but they concentrated on the rewards and said little of the punishments. There is one reference to the wicked being tortured in pits of fire but generally the Egyptians thought that those who were weighed and found wanting after death would be eternally annihilated.

In Mesopotamian literature there is no punishment after death, and no reward either. All the dead, good and bad, rich and poor, powerful and humble alike, go to the 'land of no return', the house of darkness which was like a gigantic communal grave, surrounded by walls and barred by gates, where the ghosts flew about like spectral birds and gnawed miserably on clay and dust.

Homer's underworld is also not a hell but a place of dreary darkness to which all, or nearly all, the dead go. This was the house of Hades, the god of death, whose name means 'the unseen' and who ruled what the *Iliad* calls 'the hateful Chambers of Decay that fill the gods themselves with horror.' Some vengeful lines of Sappho emphasize the hopeless condition of the dead:

> When you are dead you will lie in your grave,
> forgotten for ever,
> Because you despise the flowers of the Muse;
> in Hades – as here –
> Dimly your shadow will flit with the rest,
> unnoticed, obscure.

The Greeks feared death so intensely that they did not like to name it, saying as many people still do that someone who died had 'departed'. In the *Odyssey* the ghost of Achilles says that he would sooner be alive

Left **Pluto, the king of the Greek underworld enthroned in the 'hateful Chambers of Decay' with his wife Persephone. At their feet lies the monstrous dog Cerberus, guardian of the entrance: from a French MS *Above* The Devil dragging away a sinner; 15th century German illustration**

as the servant of a landless peasant than be king of all the dead.

Hades became a name for the underworld itself, and later a name for the Christian hell. It was either far in the west, where the sun died in the evening, or deep underground with the entrances at many places on the earth's surface. These entrances may be the legacy of an earlier belief that the dead stayed in the places where they were buried. The Styx, a stream in Arcadia, which disappeared underground, became the principal river of the underworld, across which the dead had to be ferried by Charon (see CHARON). What later became the most famous entrance of all ('easy is the descent to Avernus') was at the lake of Avernus, not far from Naples in Italy, which Virgil described in the *Aeneid*. 'There was a deep and rugged cave, stupendous and yawning wide, protected by a lake of black water and the glooming forest . . . poisonous the breath which streamed up from those black jaws and rose to the vault of sky.'

An intense love of, and concentration on, this life naturally tends to reduce the next world to a faint shadow-play. But although the Homeric picture of the dead remained extremely influential, there were other views. Some of the more important dead lived on their tombs, where they were venerated and consulted by mortals. Belief in different treatment for different people in the next world was stimulated by the mystery religions which promised a blessed afterlife to those who were initiated (see ELEUSIS; MYSTERY RELIGIONS; ORPHEUS).

Punishment in the underworld appears even in Homer. In the *Iliad* the Furies 'make men pay for perjury in the world below' and the deposed god Cronus and his allies (see CRONUS) are imprisoned in 'the bottomless pit' of Tartarus, 'where the deepest of all caverns yawns below the world, where the Iron Gates are, and the Brazen Theshold, as far below Hades as the earth is under heaven.' In the *Odyssey* (book 11) a fortunate few go to a happy afterlife in Elysium and a few who have personally insulted Zeus are tormented in Tartarus.

In Plato's time (4th century BC) there were stories about punishment after death. A character in the *Republic* mentions them and says that when a man grows old he cannot help uneasily wondering whether the stories are true. In the last book of the *Republic* the 'myth of Er' describes how the dead are judged and how the unjust are sent down under the earth. For every wrong they have done they will suffer tenfold and after a journey of 1000 years under the earth they will be purged. Er saw tyrants and other peculiarly evil men at the mouth of a cavern. When any of them who had not been sufficiently purged tried to emerge from it, the mouth 'gave a roar' and 'wild men of fiery aspect' seized them, flayed them with scourges and took them away to plunge them into Tartarus.

The descent of Aeneas to the underworld influenced the medieval picture of hell, and especially Dante's *Inferno* (see DANTE) which was so graphic that simple-minded people assumed that the poet had really visited hell. In the *Aeneid* (book 6) Aeneas sees the great battlements of Tartarus and the burning Phlegethon. The entrance is guarded by a Fury and from inside comes the sound of savage flogging, the clanking of iron chains and a terrible lamentation.

The Valley of Fire

The picture of life after death as a powerless obscurity in darkness, found in the literature of Homeric Greece, Mesopotamia and early Palestine, conflicts with the archeological evidence from the same areas that the dead were buried with grave goods, implying an active life in the otherworld. Evidently the literature does not adequately reflect the full range of beliefs, and in Palestine it seems clear that the adherents of Yahweh as the one supreme god deliberately discouraged belief in an active life after death, to prevent people from trafficking with any other supernatural beings.

In the older passages in the Old Testament all the dead, good and bad alike, go to Sheol where they live in dust and darkness (like the Mesopotamian dead) and where they know nothing, so that it is no use trying to consult them. Sheol is a great pit or a walled city, 'the land of forgetfulness', 'the land of silence'. Maggots are the bed beneath you there and worms are your covering. No god rules in Sheol and the dead are forgotten by Yahweh. But as the story of the witch of Endor (I Samuel, chapter 28) shows, they were not entirely forgotten by men and some tried to enlist their help.

Jewish hatred of foreign oppressors, with the desire to see them punished in the next world if not in this, was partly responsible for a change of attitude. So was the old problem of the unfairness of life, vividly expressed in the book of Job (chapter 21): 'One dies in full prosperity, being wholly at ease and secure, his body full of fat and the marrow of his bones moist. Another dies in bitterness of soul, never having tasted of good. They lie down alike in the dust, and the worms cover them.'

Considerations of this kind led to a growing belief that the lot of all men after death was not the same. In the 2nd century BC the Jewish leader Judas Maccabaeus made an offering of money at Jerusalem on behalf of some of his dead soldiers, on whose bodies have been found objects consecrated to idols. This was 'a reconciliation for the dead that they might be delivered from sin' and implies the belief that they would otherwise suffer in the afterworld (2 Maccabees, chapter 12). The book of Daniel predicts the 'many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt.'

There is no mention of physical torture here, but there is in another work of the same period, *1 Enoch*, which includes a vision of 'a place chaotic and horrible' with 'seven stars of the heaven bound together in it, like great mountains and burning with fire.' It was here that the angels who lusted after human women (see DEVIL) would be punished, an early trace of the belief that the fallen angels, or demons, live in hell. Then Enoch sees Sheol itself, a mountain in the west with hollow compartments in it where the souls of the dead are to wait for the day of judgement. One is for the righteous and one is for the sinners, who wait there 'in great pain' (chapters 17–22). In a later passage there is 'a deep valley with burning fire. And they brought the kings and the mighty, and began to cast them into the deep valley' (chapter 54).

This valley of fire was Gehenna where, it came to be believed, the wicked would writhe tormented in the flames. Some of the Jewish rabbis said that the punishment there would not last more than 12 months. Some said that the righteous would go straight to paradise, the wicked to eternal pain in Gehenna, and the in-between would suffer for a year in Gehenna and then be annihilated. Gehenna has three entrances, one in

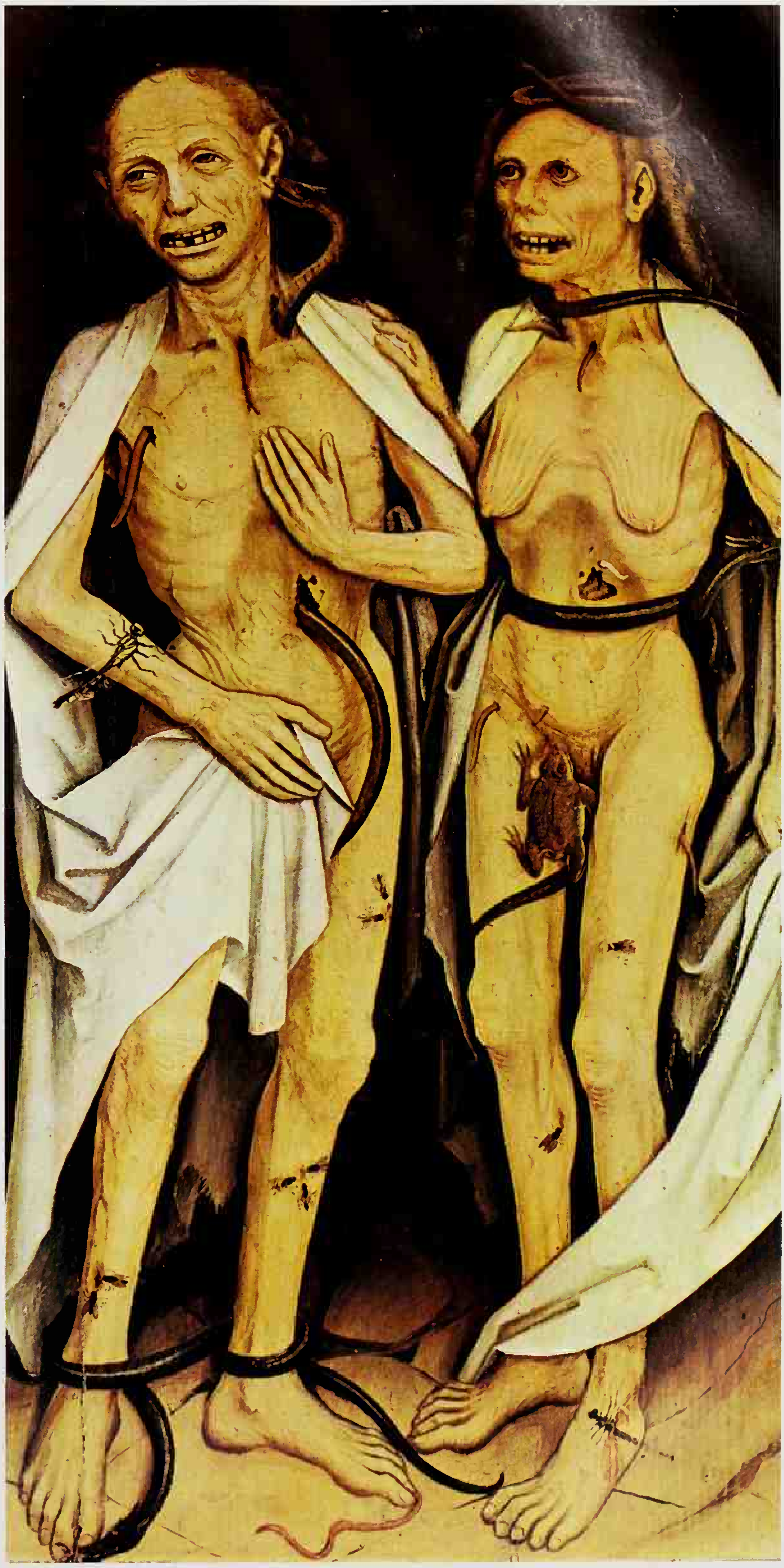
The Stench of Hell

They lie in exterior darkness. For remember, the fire of hell gives forth no light. At the command of God, the fire of the Babylonian furnace lost its heat but not its light, so, at the command of God, the fire of hell, while retaining the intensity of its heat, burns eternally in darkness. It is a never ending storm of darkness, dark flames and dark smoke of burning brimstone, amid which the bodies are heaped one upon another without even a glimpse of air. Of all the plagues with which the land of the Pharaohs was smitten, one plague alone, that of darkness, was called horrible. What name, then, shall we give to the darkness of hell which is to last not for three days alone but for all eternity?

The horror of this strait and dark prison is increased by its awful stench. All the filth of the world, all the offal and scum of the world, we are told, shall run there as to a vast reeking sewer when the terrible conflagration of the last day has purged the world. The brimstone, too, which burns there in such prodigious quantity fills all hell with its intolerable stench; and the bodies of the damned themselves exhale such a pestilential odour that, as Saint Bonaventure says, one of them alone would suffice to infect the whole world. The very air of this world, that pure element, becomes foul and unbreathable when it has been long enclosed. Consider then what must be the foulness of the air of hell. Imagine some foul and putrid corpse that has lain rotting and decomposing in the grave, a jelly-like mass of liquid corruption. Imagine such a corpse a prey to flames, devoured by the fire of burning brimstone and giving off dense choking fumes of nauseous loathsome decomposition. And then imagine this sickening stench, multiplied a millionfold and a millionfold again from the millions upon millions of fetid carcasses massed together in the reeking darkness, a huge and rotting human fungus. Imagine all this, and you will have some idea of the horror of the stench of hell.

James Joyce *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*

For hundreds of years sadistically imaginative visions of the horrors of hell served as a warning to sinners and unbelievers. Great ingenuity was exercised in giving each sin an appropriate punishment. In the *Damnation of Lovers* by the 16th century German artist Mathias Grünewald *(right)*, the flesh in whose joys the sinners have luxuriated is aged and withered and is pierced by noxious beasts, representing the poison and corruption of lust
Following page **Detail from Giotto's *Last Judgement*, showing the hell pictured by Dante with the monstrous Satan chewing on the body of Judas Iscariot. Dante's account of hell was so vivid that people thought he had actually been there**


Giraudon

the wilderness, one in the sea, and one in Jerusalem. It was next door to paradise, with the implication that part of the misery of the condemned was to see the bliss they had lost, an idea that passed into Christian theology.

The development of a Jewish hell may have been influenced by Persian Zoroastrianism in which the 'followers of the lie' are punished after death. Hell is in the far north, deep down beneath the earth, dark and stinking, the home of demons and lies, a place of stench, filth, pain and misery. There the damned soul must remain until Ahriman himself is destroyed (see AHRIMAN), by which time it will at last have come to understand reality and the wickedness of Ahriman, and will be ready for its release.

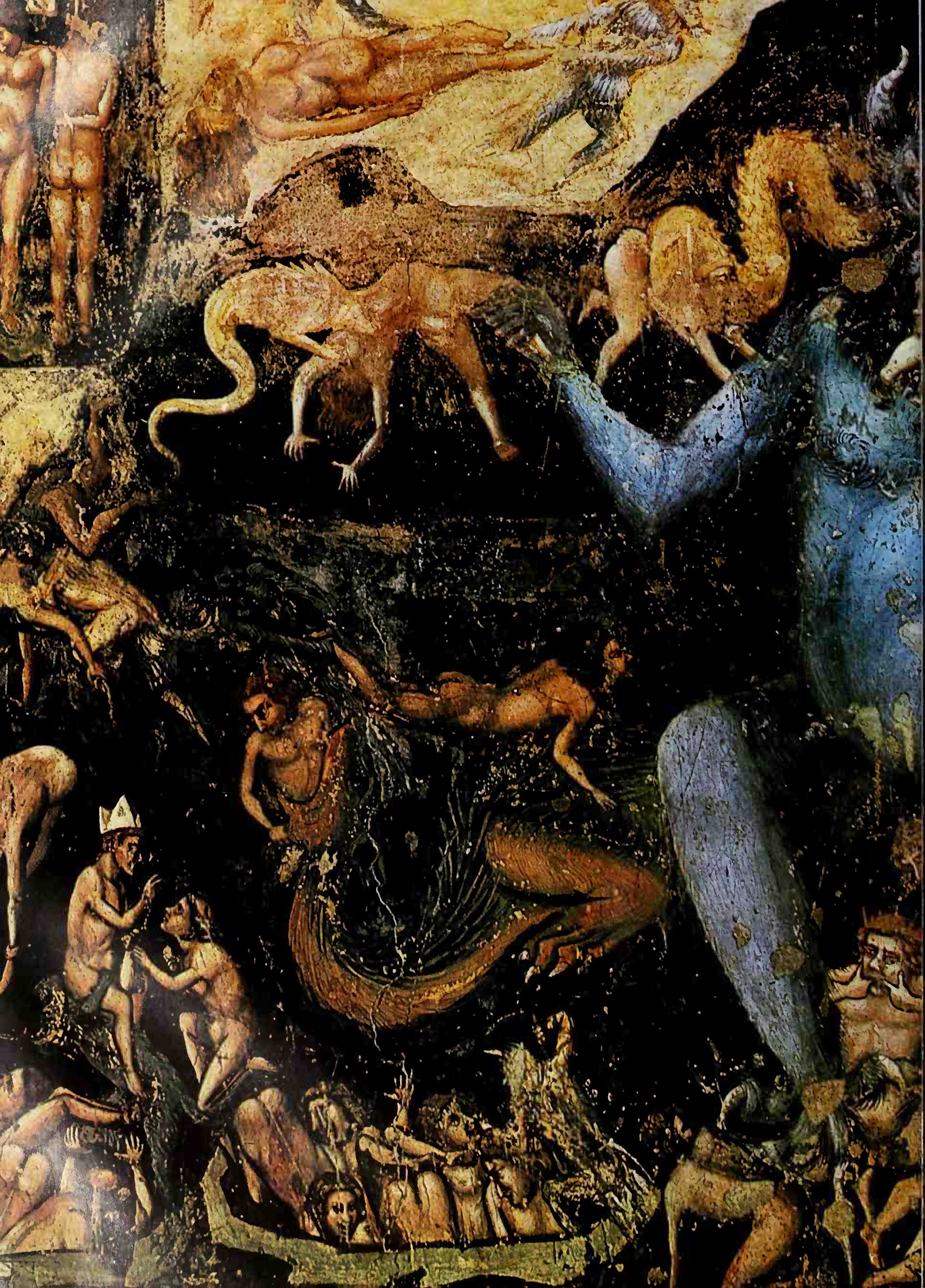
A holy man named Artay Viraf saw hell in a vision induced by hashish. It was like the inside of a grave. He experienced 'cold and an icy wind, dryness and stench', and he saw a narrow and fearful pit, thick with darkness. Noxious beasts tore and worried at the damned. And this hell had also the horror of the grave's solitariness, for each soul thought 'I am alone'.

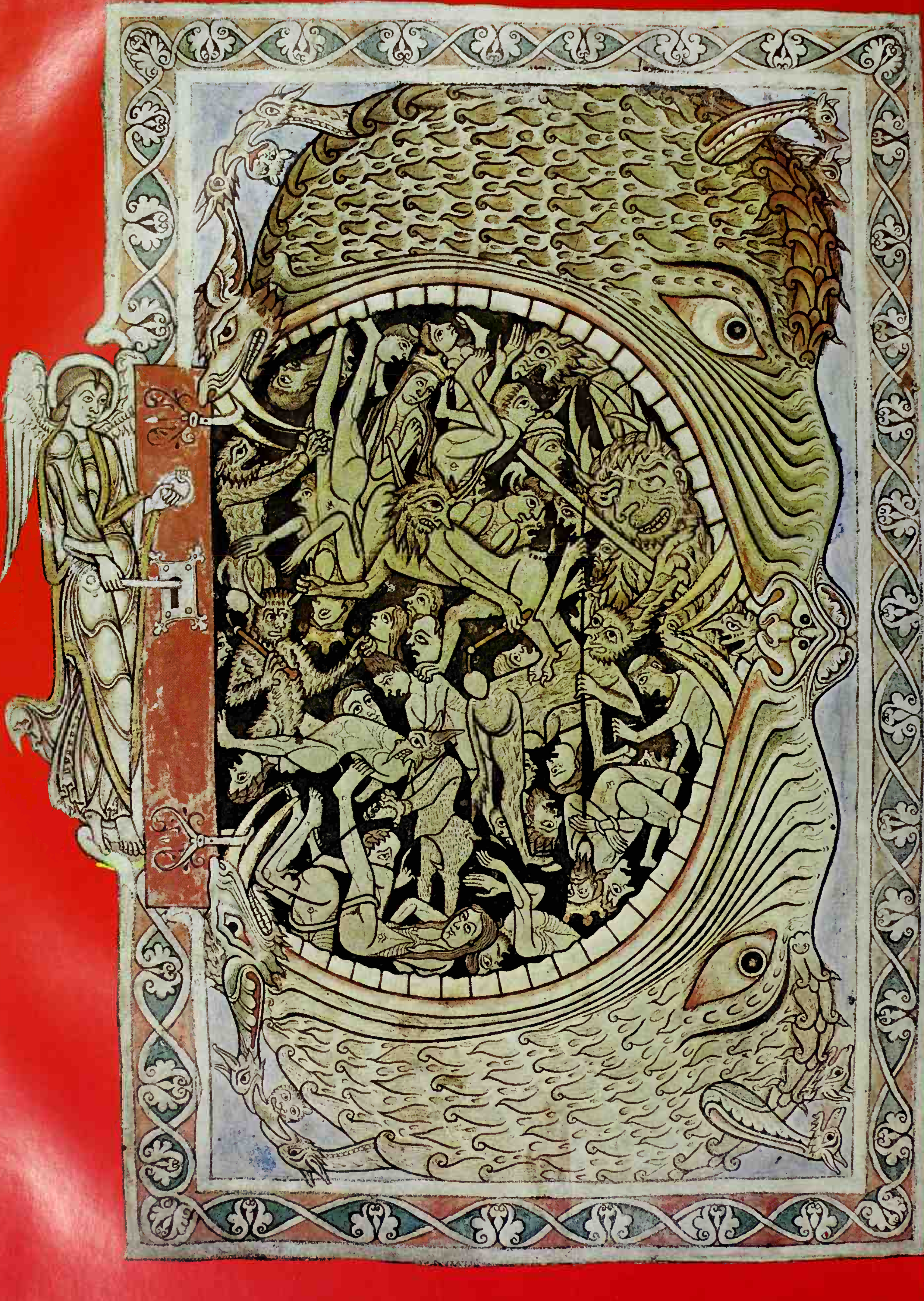
Fire and Brimstone

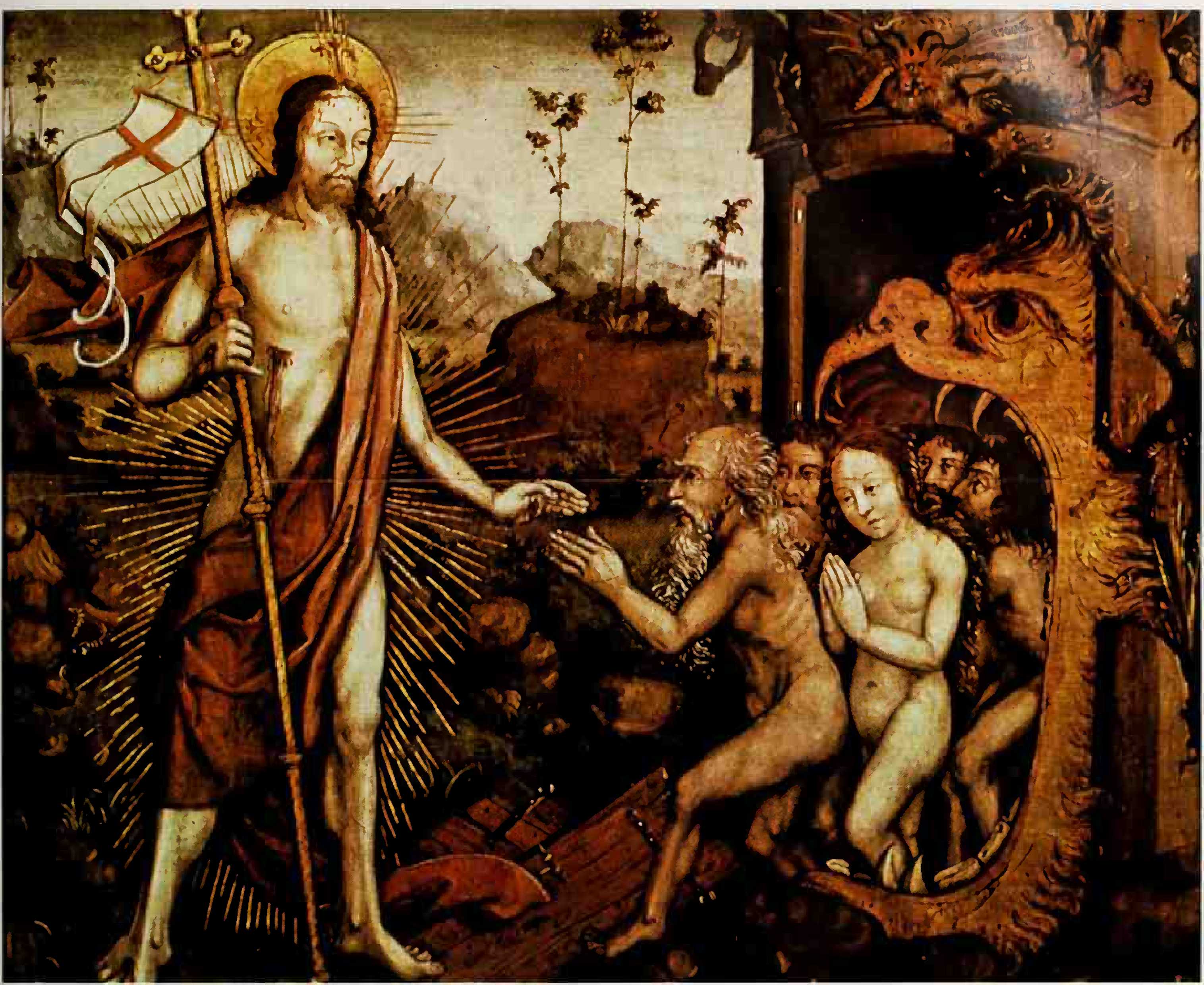
From Gehenna the Christian hell developed. Jesus said that when the Son of Man comes in glory, he will separate the good from the wicked like sheep from goats. The goats will be driven away 'into eternal punishment' in the fire prepared for the Devil and his angels (Matthew, chapter 25).

The association of fire with hell, sometimes taken as a symbol of purging, seems to have originated in the idea of burning up rubbish. Gehenna took its name from the valley of Hinnom where the rubbish of Jerusalem was burned. There is the same notion in Malachi (4.1): 'all evildoers will be stubble; the day that comes shall burn them up.' Again in Matthew (chapter 13) Jesus tells a parable about the burning of weeds and explains it with: 'The Son of Man will send his angels, and they will gather out of his kingdom all causes of sin and all evildoers, and throw them into the furnace of fire; there men will weep and gnash their teeth.'

Many of St Paul's references to the fate of the wicked suggest that they will be annihilated, though in Romans (chapter 2) dealing with 'the day of wrath', he says that







Sinners descended to the bottomless pit through the gaping maw of a monster ***Left*** **The mouth of hell, from the 12th century Winchester Psalter** ***Above*** **After his crucifixion, Christ was believed to have descended into hell, broken open the gates and released the dead from the chains binding them:** ***The Harrowing of Hell*** **by a 15th century painter of the School of Savoy**

Giraudon

for every human being who does evil 'there will be tribulation and distress'. In the book of Revelation (chapter 21) 'the lake that burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death' is the final destination of the cowardly, the faithless, the polluted, murderers, fornicators, sorcerers, idolaters and all liars. The brimstone is sulphur ('burning stone') and the reference is to Isaiah (30.33): 'For a burning place has long been prepared . . . the breath of the Lord, like a stream of brimstone, kindles it.'

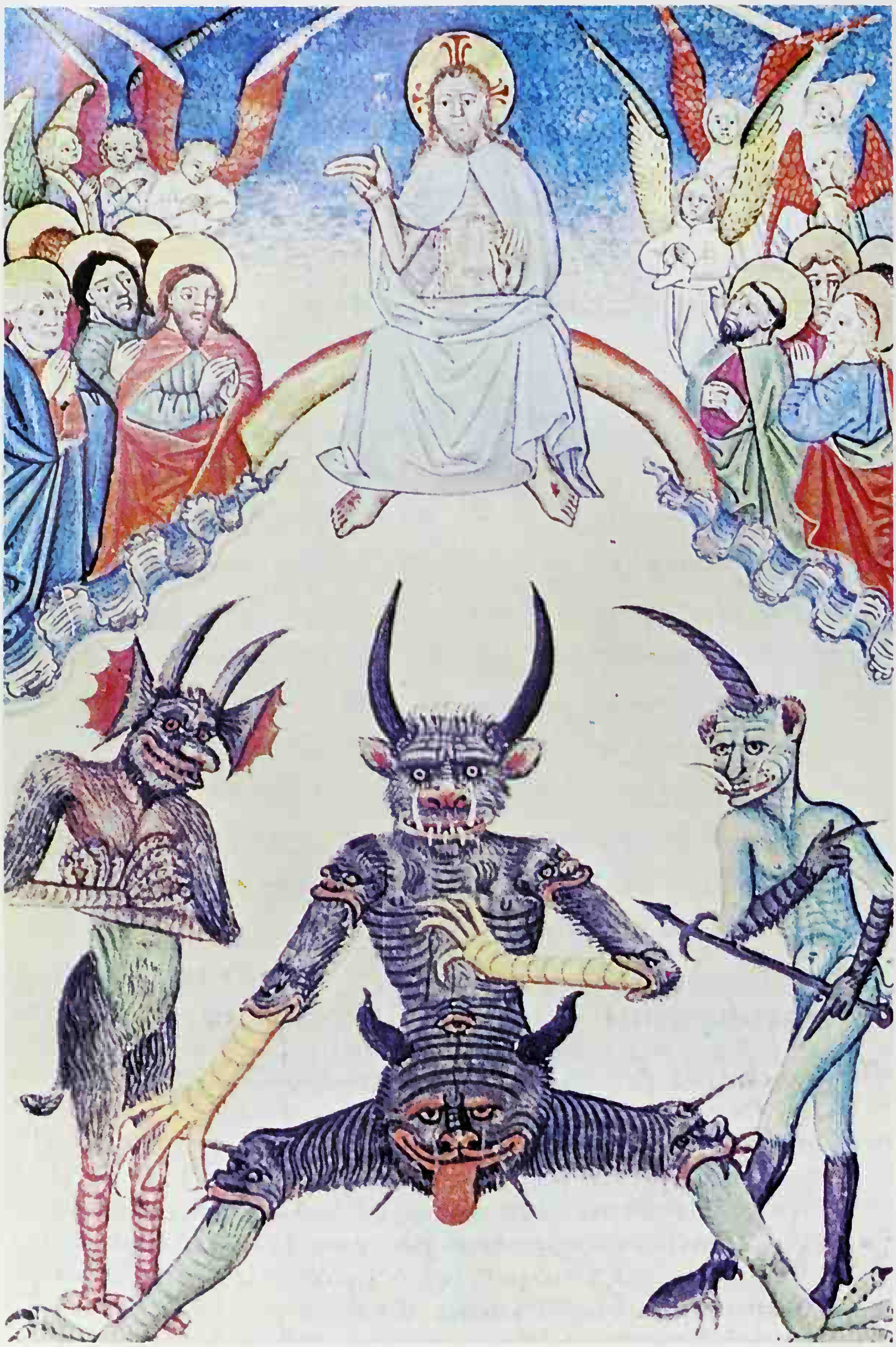
Only one passage in the New Testament (Matthew 25.46) says that the punishment in hell will last for all eternity and in the 3rd century the great theologian Origen suggested that the torment in hell would not last for ever, that the wicked and even the Devil himself would eventually be redeemed and evil totally annihilated, and that the 'fire' of hell might not be a real fire but the pangs of guilty conscience. Even he was worried that by questioning the eternity of punishment he might weaken the chief deterrent to immorality, but in fact his views were rejected by the majority of Christians and condemned as heretical by the church.

The Harrowing of Hell

In the medieval hell the damned suffered 'the pain of loss' the agony of being cut off from God, and 'the pain of sense' the physical tortures inflicted by demons. Most of the dead did not go to hell, or to heaven, but to purgatory where they were purified of sin and could be helped by the prayers of the faithful on earth, but in most descriptions of purgatory the agonies are almost as frightful as those of hell itself. Many modern Christians have returned to the outlook of Origen, seeing hell as a place where the guilty are purged of evil and unbelief, but not by physical torture. Others reject hell entirely, believing that God's infinite mercy will extend to everyone, or alternatively, that the irredeemable are not tormented and tortured but are simply annihilated.

Christ was crucified on the first Good Friday and, as the Apostles' Creed says, 'descended into hell'. He rose from the dead on Easter Sunday and the story grew up that in the interval he had 'harrowed' or despoiled hell by conquering Death and releasing his captives. The souls of the dead were in the darkness of the underworld when at midnight there appeared a great light, like the light of the sun, and a voice like thunder demanded, 'Lift up your gates, ye princes, and be lifted up, ye everlasting gates, and the King of Glory shall come in.' Death skulking in his lair asked, 'Who is this King of Glory?' and was answered, 'The Lord strong and mighty in battle' (Psalm 24). The gates and bars were broken down, the dead were loosed from their chains, the King of Glory entered in the form of a man and all the dark places of Hades were filled with light. Christ trampled on Death and seized Satan, ordering him to be tied hand and foot. He raised up Adam and the patriarchs and prophets, the righteous men of old from Abraham to John the Baptist, and led them to paradise.

Outside Christianity there are many



Hell, final resting place of the damned, is the demonic counterpart of Heaven, home of the righteous. The Devil rules in the nether regions, while Christ sits enthroned on high: medieval manuscript illustration

Bodleian Library Filmstrip

stories of descents to the underworld, including those of Odysseus, Aeneas and the hero of the *Kalevala* (see FINLAND). In some of the stories the hero harrows hell by stealing one of its treasures, which may carry immortality with it (as Arthur stole the otherworld cauldron – see ARTHUR), by releasing a victim from Death or by alleviating the pains of the tormented. The Greek hero Theseus went to the underworld but was held fast there until he was released by Hercules, who also fetched away Cerberus, the many-headed dog who guarded the gate of Hades. This Labour of Hercules may really have been a quest for immortality and a conquest of death. According to the *Iliad*, Hercules shot Hades with an arrow at the gate of the underworld and left him in agony. Xenophon's *Persian Expedition* says that the Greeks anchored near the Acherusian peninsula on the south coast of the Black Sea, 'where Heracles is said to have descended into the lower world to fetch Cerberus, and where they still show evidence of his descent for a quarter of a mile down into the earth.'

There was a Sumerian myth that the goddess Inanna went to the underworld to bring back her lover Dumuzi (Tammuz). She turned into a corpse but was revived by the messengers of the god Enki and came back to earth. It is likely that in the original tale she succeeded in rescuing Dumuzi. In Hindu mythology the god Krishna went to the kingdom of the dead and obtained the release of a favourite pupil. In Buddhism a Bodhisattva often enters a hell and releases the sufferers there from their pains. The Chinese Buddhist goddess Kwan Yin visited a hell in a trance and it was turned into a paradise.

King of the Dead

The word 'hell' itself comes from an Anglo-Saxon root meaning 'to cover' or 'to conceal' with an obvious application to a grave. The Scandinavian goddess Hel ruled those who died of old age or disease (those who fell in battle went to a happy afterlife in Valhalla). She was fierce and pitiless and her underworld of Nifelheim was freezing cold, like the lowest circle of hell in Dante's *Inferno*.

The Islamic picture of hell resembles the Jewish and Christian ones, by which it was influenced. In India the idea of punishment of the wicked after death is very old but in both Buddhism and Hinduism the numerous hells are not places of eternal torture but stages in the chain of birth, death and rebirth which the self must undergo unless it can escape from the cycle altogether. At each death the self goes to a paradise or a hell corresponding to the way it has behaved in each life.

The Tibetan Book of the Dead says that after death each person goes before Yama, the King of the Dead, who holds up to him a mirror in which his deeds are reflected. 'The mirror in which Yama seems to read your past is your own memory, and also his judgement is your own. It is you yourself who pronounce your own judgement, which in its turn determines your next rebirth.' The terrible god and the frightening monsters which are seen are 'an illusion'. But popular belief in India, China and Japan imagines tortures and torturers as real, as vindictive and as ingenious as any in the western traditions. The history of hell is a descent into the infernal pit of the human mind.

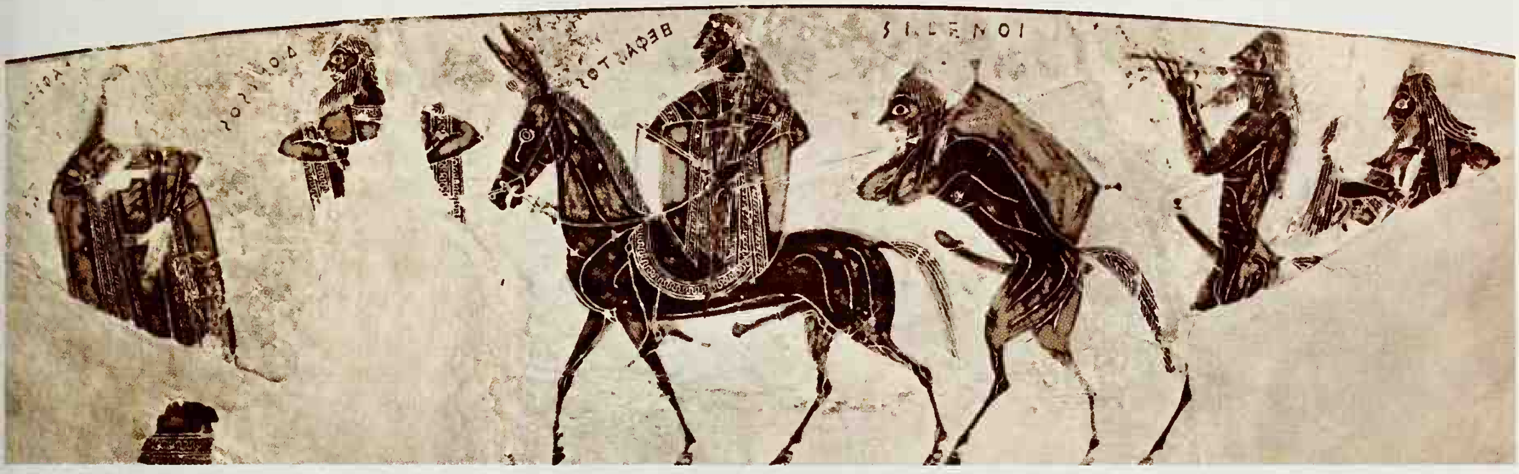
(See also FIRE; JUDGEMENT OF THE DEAD; PURGATORY.)

RICHARD CAVENDISH

The word 'Volcano' comes from Vulcan, the Latin name of the lame smith god Hephaestus; his role as god of elemental fire and patron of metal-workers caused him to be feared and respected by mankind

HEPHAESTUS

THE UNCOUTH GOD of smiths, who was himself a smith, Hephaestus (or Vulcan as he was known to the Romans) was originally a god of fire, in the aspect of flaming gas rising from the earth in certain places. It was only later that he came to be associated with volcanoes in Sicily and Italy. His name was used poetically as a synonym for fire from Homer down to poets who were familiar with Nature-philosophy. He was not in origin a Greek god, his name having no etymology in Greek, but his cult spread from Lycia in southwestern Anatolia to various parts of Greece; there are frequent references to him in Greek literature.



Hirmer Fotoarchiv

The divine smith of Greek mythology, Hephaestus was cast into the sea at birth by his mother Hera, who wished to rid herself of such an ugly child. Found and reared by two nereids, his fame as a craftsman quickly reached the ears of the gods and he was summoned to assume his rightful place in heaven: the return of Hephaestus to Mount Olympus, from the Clitias krater

In the *Iliad* he is the son of Hera, who threw him into the sea in shame at having borne such a weakly infant. He was rescued by the nymphs Thetis and Eurynome and remained with them in secret for nine years, making jewels and ornaments, until his talents were discovered by the gods and he was given a smithy on Olympus. Reconciled with his mother, he once tried to protect her from the anger of Zeus, but for this interference Zeus seized him by the foot and hurled him out of heaven. He fell for a whole day before finally striking the island of Lemnos, crushing his legs in the fall: this is only one explanation for his lameness.

Hephaestus built the palaces of the gods on Olympus and Zeus's golden throne, but he is particularly famous as a maker of armour: of Diomedes' breastplate, of the sceptre and also the *aegis*, or shield, held by Zeus, which when shaken produced storms and thunder, and of the arms made for Achilles to replace the armour lost with the slaying of Patroclus. Among his other wonders are mechanical handmaidens of gold, possessed of thought and speech, who support him as he moves, and who assist him at his work. Sometimes he acts as cupbearer at the feasts of the gods, who laugh at him as he bustles round clumsily on his lame legs. In his elemental character he is called by Hera to drive back the river Xanthus because the river god, also called Xanthus, is furious at his stream being blocked with corpses slain by Achilles, and threatens to overwhelm him. Hephaestus spreads fire everywhere, burning the corpses and the vegetation by the river, and then begins to dry up the river until Xanthus entreats Hera to stop him.

A Net to Ensnare Lovers

In the *Odyssey* Hephaestus, with Athene, is called 'skilled in making gold flow round silver'. He is the maker of a silver mixing bowl with gold edges given by Phaedimus of Sidon to Menelaus; also of the gold and silver hounds that guard the palace of Alcinous, immortal and ageless animals. In a celebrated mythological scene, the lay of Demodocus, minstrel of Alcinous, Hephaestus takes revenge for the faithlessness of Aphrodite, here his wife. While he is away in his favourite island of Lemnos, Aphrodite is joined by her lover, Ares, but at dawn they are trapped together by an invisible gossamer-light metal net which Hephaestus had forged for the purpose. While they are ensnared, the gods are called in to laugh at them.

Hesiod in the *Theogony* states clearly that Hera bore Hephaestus without any union with Zeus because she had a bitter quarrel with him at the time. This could explain why Hephaestus was born lame: Hera on her own could not give birth to normal children. Hephaestus's wife here is Aglaia, the youngest of the Graces. Hesiod relates how Zeus, who wishes to punish men for having acquired fire through Prometheus, orders Hephaestus to create the beautiful Pandora to be a plague to them. She was fashioned of clay in the form of a beautiful maiden, like the immortal goddesses, and other deities gave her other qualities including a deceitful nature and a shameless mind.

In the *Homeric Hymns* it is said that Hephaestus, like Athene, taught men on earth to make glorious works. They had formerly lived in caves in the mountains like beasts, but now, having learned crafts through him, they live in safety and comfort all their lives in their own houses. Much the same claims are made by Aeschylus for Prometheus as teacher and benefactor.

Among the lyric poets, Simonides (c 556-468 BC) said that Hephaestus made for Minos of Crete the bronze giant Talos who guarded his coasts. Pindar, following others, mentions Hephaestus as maker of the bronze axe which split open the head of Zeus for the birth of Athene. In his *Pythian Odes* the expression 'fountains of Hephaestus' is used for the volcanic fires of Etna which are said to be the breath of the monster Typhon.

In Aeschylus's *Prometheus Bound* Hephaestus appears with the giants who drag Prometheus to the place where he is to be chained on the crag. They remind him that he has orders from Zeus to fasten Prometheus to the rock in bonds of adamant, impenetrably hard, with wedges driven through his body. He is most unwilling to do so and greatly pities Prometheus, a god of his own kin. The sound of his cosmic hammering disturbs the nymphs of Ocean in their caves so that they rise to lament with him.

In Sophocles's *Philoctetes* Hephaestus's fire on Lemnos is mentioned, and in his *Daedalus* the making of Talos by the smith god is prominent. In his satyr-play *Cedalion* it seems that the scene was Hephaestus's workshop on Lemnos, and that the god gave to the blinded giant Orion his servant, the dwarf Cedalion, as a guide to keep him walking eastward until the rising sun struck his face and restored his sight. In Plato's *Protagoras* Hephaestus works with Athene in a heavenly workshop from which Prometheus steals fire.

In Callimachus's *Hymn to Artemis* the goddess as an infant is taken by her mother Leto to visit Hephaestus on the island of Lipara, where he has his forge and the Cyclopes Arges and Steropes are working under his direction on a golden horse-trough for Poseidon. In Apollonius's *Argonautica* the returning Argonauts pass the smith god's forge in the Aeolian islands. Iris swiftly brings word to him from Hera that he shall keep his fires quiet until the *Argo* has passed. Later Hephaestus drops his hammer to watch, like most of the other gods, the passage of the *Argo* through the Wandering Rocks.

God of Erupting Fire

The presence of Hephaestus in the volcanoes of Italy and Sicily becomes even more marked from the time of Aeschylus and Pindar onward, in the 6th century BC. By their day the Greek colonists who settled on these coasts, some of whom came from the eastern Aegean, had transferred to their new homeland the scene of Hephaestus's activities, as of other fiery manifestations. The god's first western home was apparently Lipara (now Vulcano) also called Hiera Hephaistos, the sacred isle of Hephaestus. He came only later to Etna, where the earlier established Cyclopes became his workmen.

The original seat of Hephaestus was in Lycia where the Lycian Olympus, as described by Maximus of Tyre, 'gives forth a flame from its summit, not like the fire of Etna, but peaceful and moderate. This fire is regarded by the Lycians as the temple of the god and his visible images.' The hot gas, as modern travellers have found, was in fact a small escape of burning petroleum. In the Aegean there was such an escape of gas on Hephaestus's mountain Mosychlus on Lemnos, his first foothold. The sudden spread of fire which Hephaestus was able to make is most like that of igniting gas over a wide area. The vents of gas were commonly regarded as the chimneys of his underground forge.

In Asia Minor Hephaestus had 50 shrines but far fewer in other Greek lands, though his cult as a craftsman god was well known in Athens. The Greeks who arrived in the Sicilian and Italian volcanic belt attributed its much more devastating fires to the same god, no doubt fusing him with earlier native gods of fire and volcanic action.

The history of the Roman Volcanus (Vulcan) forms a rather puzzling epilogue to that of the Greek Hephaestus. In classical Latin literature Vulcan makes his appearance very much in the style of Hephaestus. The name Volcanus is of doubtful origin and meaning, but there appears to be an Etruscan deity Velchanos; scholars are inclined to think that Volcanus or Velchanos is an eastern deity, perhaps brought by the Etruscans, and perhaps having a common origin with Hephaestus. Volcanus is a god of fire, but usually of a more menacing or destructive fire than that of the original Hephaestus in his normal manifestations. Thus his name is the source of our word 'volcano'.

E. D. PHILLIPS

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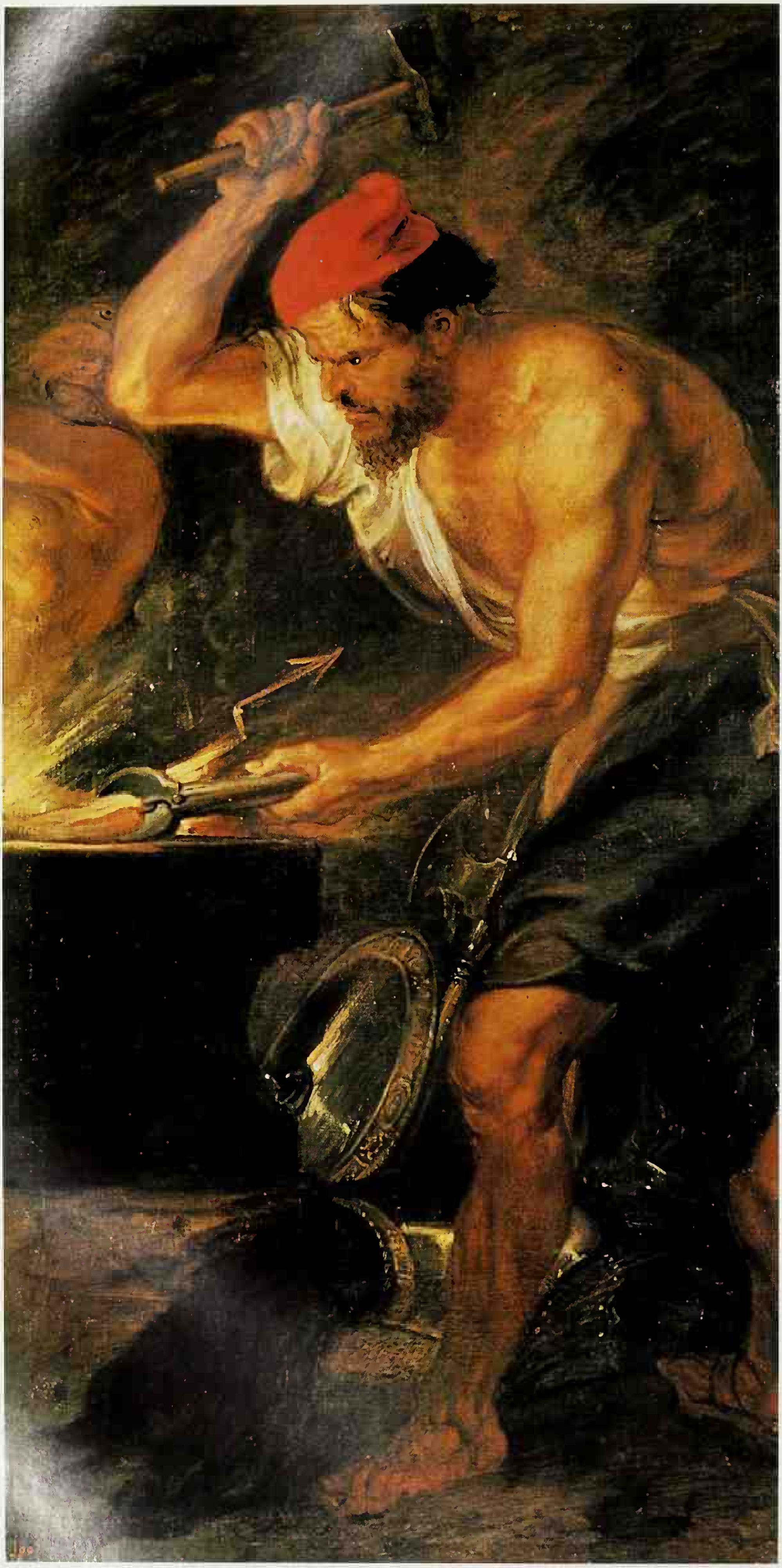


Prado Museum

In his heavenly smithy, Hephaestus, known to the Romans as Vulcan, forged many fabulous and magical objects, from a shield for Zeus which caused storms and thunder, to golden handmaidens who could both walk and talk: *Vulcan* by Rubens

Although the queen of heaven was traditionally the patron of lawful marriage, she was requently unfaithful to the philandering Zeus and their union produced no lawful offspring; as a special protectress of females, there is a hint of her origin as a mother goddess

HERA

'LADY OR MISTRESS' was possibly the original meaning of the name Hera, which indicates a line of descent from the old Aegean mother goddess. She became a goddess of marriage and, especially in this capacity, she was worshipped in most areas of Greece in historical antiquity. Yet there can be no doubt that her principal cult centre was the Argive territory in the north-east of the Peloponnese. Tracing the origins of the cult back into Mycenean times, it becomes clearer that the Argolid peninsula was her real domain and that other genuine early centres are indeed rare. In fact these can be reduced to three: Euboea, the large island which lies adjacent to the coasts of Attica, Boeotia and the southern part of Thessaly, whose inhabitants are called Abantes by Homer; Samos, another principal island of the Aegean, off the coast of Ionia; and Olympia, a small plain in Elis, in the west Peloponnese, where there was the sacred grave of Zeus and where the Olympic games were celebrated.

In Euboea, the myth and ritual of Hera were almost identical with the Argive. The name Euboea means the island 'of fair oxen'. Legend said that the Abantes settled there under the leadership of Abas, an early Argive king.

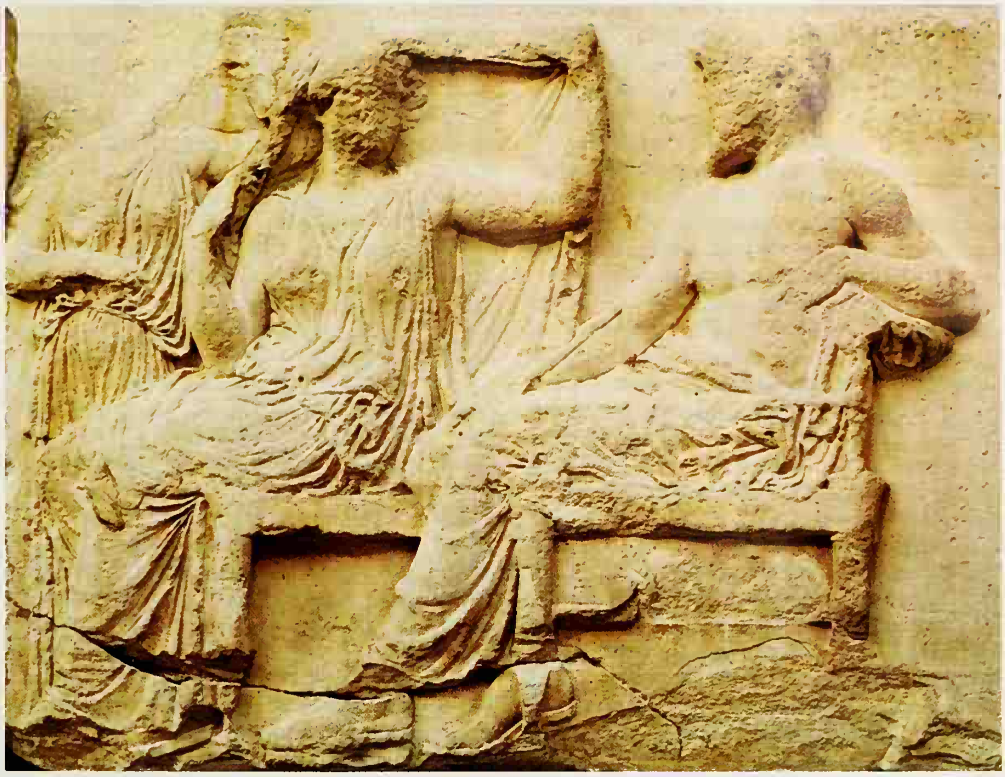
Hera's temple on Samos was very large and her cult there of considerable antiquity. Tradition said that her image came there from Argos, though the Samians disputed this and believed she had been born under the willow tree in the sanctuary. The confusion in the tradition may support the view that Hera had supplanted an even earlier cult of a goddess but again there is memory of a connection with the Argive.

Hera's temple at Olympia was the oldest and this would imply an association with the tradition that the games were founded by the Argive Hercules – the hero 'called after Hera' (see HERCULES).

Here the chief centre of her cult was the Argive Heraion, 'Our Lady's Temple', built on the lower slopes of a mountain called Euboea and said to have been so called after Hera's nurse. As the principal goddess of the Argive plain, where Agamemnon's royal stronghold of Mycene was situated, she gave wholehearted support to the cause of the Achaeans in the Trojan War. 'The three towns I love best,' says Hera in the *Iliad*, 'are Argos, Sparta and Mycene.'

The Spartan cult of Argive Hera was brought from Argos. Hera's most northerly shrine was at Pharygai, on the Gulf of Malis, in south Thessaly, and this was founded by settlers from the Argolid. She had cult centres in most cities of Boeotia; the oldest appears to have been on Mt Cythaeron at the top of the Corinthian Gulf. Here she had cult centres too at Corinth, Heraia and Sicyon, which are included in Agamemnon's domains as defined in the *Iliad*. It seems from excavation that her cult at Heraia derived from the Argive Heraion and, according to tradition, her cults at Sicyon derived from the same centre.

It has been argued by G. Thomson (in his *Prehistoric Aegean*) that, if the focus of Hera's worship on the mainland was the Argive Heraion, it follows that she must have reached the Argive plain from overseas. Her oldest image in the Heraion, made of pear wood, had been brought there from Tiryns, not far from Nauplia, with its fine harbour, which could well have been a main port of call for Minoan traders. At Nauplia there was a cult of Hera Parthenos, 'the Maiden'. At Hermione there was another good harbour. Here also there was a cult of Hera Parthenos; and there was a tradition that Zeus and Hera landed at Hermione when they arrived in Greece from Crete.


Michael Holford

The goddess Hera was possibly an ancient Minoan mother goddess who, with the increasing supremacy of the Greek Zeus, was linked with him in sacred marriage: they were honoured as patrons of lawful marriage despite their own marital irregularities: section from the Parthenon, from the British Museum

Uneasy Marriage

Not the least contradictory aspect of the relationship of Zeus and Hera, traditional Olympian patrons of lawful marriage, is its lack of lawful offspring. Zeus is father of many children, but Hera is not their mother. Hera has fewer children, but Zeus is not their father. According to Hesiod, Hebe, Ares and Ilithyia were the children of Zeus and Hera, but it is doubtful if this can be supported. Ilithyia however, could well have been Hera's daughter. For her birthplace was a cave near Cnossus in Crete.

The evidence from inscriptions and from coins in historical times confirms the continuing importance of Hera in Cretan religious belief. Her early Cretan associations suggest that she was originally a manifestation of the Minoan mother goddess; and they equally support the inference that, despite the supremacy of Argive Hera on the mainland, the worship of Hera had been carried from Crete into Greece. Hence the uneasy marriage relationship of Zeus and Hera has been explained as the result of the intrusion of a Greek patriarchal deity, whose original partner may have been called Dione, into the province of the Minoan mother goddess. This goddess' partner, who was supplanted by Zeus, had once been the hero 'called after Hera', that is to say, none other than Hercules himself.

Certainly the Greek evidence for a sacred marriage of Zeus and Hera, though comparatively late, suggest that Zeus had an older partner who was not Hera. Alternatively, Hera may have had an older partner who was not Zeus. It should be explained that the sacred marriage (*hieros gamos*) is part of the Oriental ritual pattern underlying the concept of such relationships as the Great Mother-Attis, Ishtar-Tammuz, Aphrodite-Adonis (see CYBELE). In our oldest literary source, Homer, there was a sacred marriage in Crete between Iasion and Demeter in a thrice-ploughed field, that is to say, in a field prepared for sowing. The sacred marriage was originally closely involved with the religious conception of a vegetation cycle of the death and rebirth of crops (see DYING GOD; FERTILITY).

There are definite mythological grounds for the view, maintained by Sir James Frazer and A. B. Cook, that, at Cnossus in Crete there had once existed a ritual marriage of sun god and moon goddess in bovine form. In later cults, the ritual became a sacred marriage of Zeus and Hera, which reputedly occurred near the river Theren, where a sanctuary was built and yearly sacrifices were offered with traditional wedding rites. Similarly, at Gortyna, also in Crete, the goddess Europa, who had originally been carried off by Zeus in the form of a bull, became identified with Hera.

Here mention should be made of the view that Hera, described by Homer on many occasions with the traditional epithet *boopis* ('cow-eyed', 'cow-faced') was originally a cow goddess. Her priestess at Argos was Io, who was ravished by Zeus when she had been transformed by him into a cow. The myth of Io also reflects a sacred marriage, the bride being the priestess of Hera, the bridegroom the priest of Zeus disguised as a bull. The ox-herd Argos who watched over Io was Panoptes ('all-seeing') – an epithet of Zeus and the sun; and Argos wore a bull's hide.

Mother of the Minotaur

According to the famous myth, Pasiphae ('She who shines on all', that is, the moon), wife of King Minos, conceived a passion for a bull, sent in answer to the prayers of Minos. Instead of sacrificing this bull, as he had promised, Minos sent it away among his herds and sacrificed another one. His punishment for this piece of deception was the unnatural passion of his wife. Daedalus made for Pasiphae a hollow wooden cow on wheels, sewed it up in the hide of a cow which he had skinned, and put it in the meadow where the bull grazed. Inside this image he put Pasiphae, and the bull coupled with it. In due course Pasiphae gave birth to Asterios ('Starry One'), who was called the Minotaur ('Minos bull'). The Minotaur had the head of a bull, but the rest of him was human. In obedience to certain oracles, Minos then shut him up under guard in the labyrinth, which had also been made by Daedalus, the Athenian architect. The labyrinth in the Greek tradition, was a building whose intricate windings led astray those who sought to escape from it.

The cow and bull became such integral factors in the life of the communities that they figure in mythology as guides in the founding of cities by those who followed the advice of the sun god. The story of Cadmus, who, in obedience to the Delphic oracle, followed a cow until it lay down on the site of Thebes, is familiar. Since the sun was conceived as a bull, it seems likely that the labyrinth at Cnossus was an actual arena of solar pattern designed for the performance of a mimetic dance, in which a dancer may have masqueraded as a bull and represented the movement of the sun.

The labyrinth supposedly built by Daedalus was recognized in antiquity as an imitation of the Egyptian labyrinth, which, in turn, was generally believed to be sacred to the sun. The dances in the labyrinth were connected in antiquity with the Roman Game of Troy, performed by bands of armed youths on horseback.

Juno was identified by the Romans with Greek Hera, and she was worshipped as the queen of heaven, protectress over females, as was Jupiter over males. She was supposed to watch over women from birth to death and the month of June which was named for her, was supposed to be most favourable for marrying.

The Etruscan Herkle and Unial and the Roman Hercules and Juno were in the same sort of mythological relationship as Greek Hercules and Hera. At Roman weddings the bride's girdle was consecrated to Juno and its knot, untied by the bridegroom on the marriage couch, was called the 'Herculean knot', which, as Cook concluded, indicates that, when the cult of Hercules spread to Italy, at a very early date, the acknowledged partner of Hercules was Hera.

(See also ZEUS.)

R. F. WILLETS

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The real or imaginary value of herbs has long encouraged their use for both magical and medicinal purposes, especially in China. Recent research has boosted the popularity of herbal medicines, especially in the West

HERBS

IN MAGIC, as in medicine, herbs have been used since ancient times. The oldest Chinese herbal, the *P'en Ts'ao* by the Emperor Shen-Nung, allegedly dates from 2900 BC. It lists 365 remedies, of which 314 were probably plant extracts which were in everyday use in China in that period. The Babylonian *Code of Hammurabi* (1728-1686 BC) includes herbal remedies made from such herbs as liquorice and cassia, both still in common use today. In the 5th century BC the Greek doctor Hippocrates listed some 400 herbs in common use and Dioscorides (1st century AD) wrote a herbal using 600 plants, which became the basis of many later works.

In the West European Dark Ages (400-1000 AD), however, magical qualities were widely attributed to an extensive range of plants, sometimes with little obvious justification. To preserve all the mysteries of herbalism the 'herbwife' employed elaborate rituals, such as the need to gather plants at night, preferably by moonlight. Only in this way, unseen by the sun, was the hurt to the plant and the theft from Mother Earth – still often secretly considered the Earth Goddess – repaid.

One of the sources of Dioscorides' *Materia Medica* was Pliny the Elder (23-79 AD), the author of *The Natural History,* who documented many herbs and their real and supposed properties before dying in the eruption of Vesuvius which wiped out Pompeii. Herbals written during the Middle Ages and the early Renaissance were mainly restatements of these two classical sources.

Paracelsus (1493-1541) was immensely influential and helped popularize the Doctrine of Signatures, which suggested that the visual likenesses of plant parts to organs of the human body indicated that the plant concerned could be used to treat diseases of this organ. This likeness was considered a stamp or 'signature' imparted by a god or the astral guardian of the plant to indicate its particular curative virtues. For example, plants with yellow flowers or roots were considered suitable for jaundice, whilst bryony, because it is shaped like a swollen foot, was thought to be good for dropsy.

This doctrine was probably responsible for delaying proper research into plant properties, but it persisted for a considerable period. Among many herbals of the sixteenth century, one of the most heavily reprinted was that of John Gerard (1545-1612) of Nantwich. He travelled extensively, collecting herbs and medical lore in Russia, Denmark, Poland and other northern European countries. He worked for most of his life as a superintendent of Lord Burleigh's gardens in London. In 1595 Gerard was elected a member of the Court of the Barber-Surgeons' Company (later to become its master), and in 1597 he published his herbal.

His contemporary, John Parkinson, produced the important herbal *Theatrum Botanicum*, which was, however, only printed in 1640, after his death. One of the most popular herbals ever written was that of Nicolas Culpeper (1616-1654). In his explanation of healing, herbs, astrology and the Doctrine of Signatures came together. The two approaches, when combined, proved immenseley popular.Many new herbs now found their way into medical books and pharmacopoeias.

Herbalism in the New World

The first written and illustrated record of native American herb lore was made by Juan Badianus, a Mexican Indian doctor. Badianus had been educated by Catholic priests and so he wrote his manuscript in Latin. Published in 1552, this recorded many old native medical practices. Plants such as sassafras, ginseng and maidenhair fern were thus added to the herbal repertory. In 1643 William Wood, an Englishman, published a book called *New England Prospect* which devoted a chapter to New World herbs. Many religious communities later began to set up medicinal herb gardens, such as the Shakers' garden in New Lebanon, New York, which was planted in 1820. By 1857 this garden had produced over 75 tons of medicinal herbs.

By the first half of the 19th century, French and German chemists had begun to isolate active substances like quinine and morphine from their plant sources. Sweet birch bark, for example, had been used for generations to cure aches and pains. In 1874 its active ingredients were finally synthesized in Germany, thereby producing aspirin, probably the most popular household medicine of all time.

Many drugs are of course derived from plant remedies, such as digitalis, extracted from foxglove, which is used as a heart stimulant. Among the more modern classics of herbalism are Potter's *New Cyclopaedia.* This has subsequently been sponsored by the company of the same name, which continues both to research and to produce a vast quantity of herbal remedies. Maude Grieve's *The Modern Herbal* is a standard and sizeable reference book.

Bach Flower Remedies

Dr Edward Bach (1886-1936) was a Welshman who subscribed to the holistic view of treatment, that is he preferred to examine the whole patient, including his emotional state, rather than simply attempting to counter particular symptoms. He read Dr Samuel Hahnemann's works on homoeopathy (see HOMOEOPATHY) and in 1919 joined the London Homoeopathic Hospital. He became convinced that the body was a mirror of a person's mental condition, and noted that the most despondent patients made the slowest recovery.

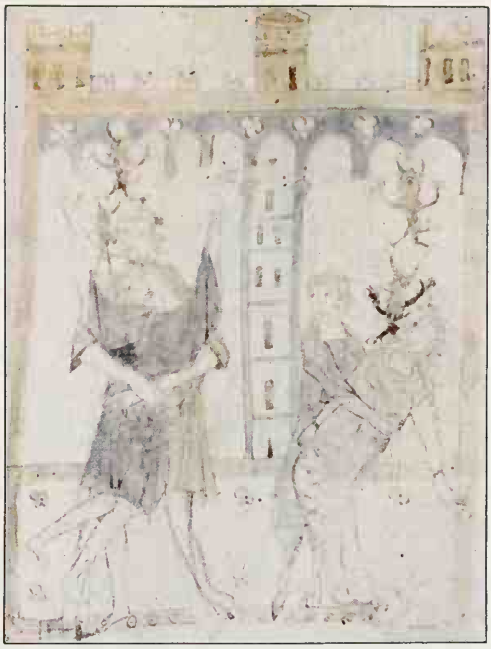
Bach reasoned that if the mental state of a patient could be improved, so could their physical state. He believed that the essences of certain wild plants could be used to treat a patient's emotional state, and that this, in turn, would aid their recovery from related physical ailments. His method of extraction was to pick the flowers early in the morning while they were still dewy, and then float them in water in bright sunlight or simmer them gently so as not to boil off the essential oils. To this liquid he added a little brandy as a preservative. He eventually developed 38 natural remedies for various negative states of mind, grouped into their seven main categories.

These categories were fear (remedies include aspen and mimulus flowers), despondency (larch, pine), uncertainty (cerato, gentian), lack of interest (clematis, honeysuckle), loneliness (heather, impatiens), over-sensitivity (agrimony, centaury), and over-concern for others (treated with chicory and vervain). His work is still carried on at the Mount Vernon Centre in Oxfordshire.

Gradual experimentation has led to some standardization in herbal medicines. This has replaced the old rule of thumb approach or the Doctrine of Signatures thinking. As concern grows about the unpredictable side-effects and addictiveness of modern synthetic drugs, more people are turning to natural remedies, particularly herbs. At the same time prescribed dosages of herbs have been considerably reduced to meet criticisms by conventional doctors, sometimes reducing their potency to the point of ineffectiveness. Phytotherapy is the name given to an updated and standardized form of herbalism, pioneered by the 19th century Swiss doctor Alfred Vogel, which is more in keeping with conventional medical practice.

Chinese Herbal Practice

If the world's first great herbal was the *P'en Ts'ao* of 2900 BC, the next herbalist of note was also Chinese: the semi-mythical Yellow Emperor, Huang-ti, who is said to have ruled from 2697 to 2595 BC. Even if one takes a very conservative view of Chinese dating, these texts still date from at least the first millennium before Christ. The first major Chinese medical work to be translated into a Western language was the *Materia Medica* of Li-Shih-Chen, which was written during the 16th century AD. It lists 12,000 prescriptions and analyses 1,074 plant substances.



In addition to their curative powers, many herbs had magical properties and were used by witches and exorcists: casting out devils, from the herbal of Apuleius

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Herbal medicine in China retains a stronger presence than in the West, despite the emergence of Chinese communism in 1949. Even in present day mainland China, there are teams of so-called 'barefoot doctors' who primarily use herbal rather than Western medicine. In modern Chinese pharmacies in Hong Kong, Macao and Singapore, it is not unusual to see traditional herbal remedies sold down one side of the shop, and Western proprietary medicines sold on the other side.

An excellent example of the selective use by modern science of herbal remedies is provided by the Chinese herb *Ma Huang* (*Ephedra vulgaris* or *sinica*). The herb was seen as a useful source of the compound ephedrine, an alkaloid which raises blood pressure. However the original herb has six other alkaloids, one of which actually acts to reduce blood pressure. Ephedrine in isolation is a dangerous drug. In *Ma Huang*, when used as a herbal preparation, the six other naturally compensatory alkaloids act as an automatic control over the potentially dangerous effects of an overdose – which might lead to fatally raised blood pressure. The herb is now also often used to treat asthma.

The *hakim* are practitioners of the *Unani* system of medicine widely used in the Middle East, India and Pakistan. They derive their medical ideas partly from the medical theory of 'humours' of the Greek philosopher Empedocles (c 490-430 BC) and Hippocrates, and partly from the Arabic medical tradition of Avicenna (ibn-Sina) (980-1037), itself deeply influenced by Greek thought. This medical system uses only plants and is broadly similar to the Indian Ayurvedic system, although the Indian approach seems to have originated independently.

Common to all such holistic approaches including homoeopathy, Ayurveda and Bach flower remedies (see AYURVEDA), is the practice of utilizing plant material in their remedies. Standardizing dosages remains more difficult with herbal than conventional medicines, however, which still limits their use.

Methods of Preparation

The most common method of herbal preparation is as an infusion or decoction. The first is made by pouring boiling water over ground roots, barks, whole herbs or seed, and allowing to stand for half an hour. The proportion recommended is usually 1 pint of water to 1 ounce of herb, with the dose varying from a tablespoon to a teacup of the resultant strained liquid. Tisanes (an infusion made from dried leaves) fall into this category. The decoction is made with cold water, which is boiled for approximately 20 minutes after addition to the herb. Other liquid extracts are prepared by evaporation in a vacuum, cold percolation, or high pressure extraction, according to need. Tinctures are prepared by extraction with alcohol, formerly with brandy. This process is particularly used for any herbs whose properties are destroyed by heating, or for resinous material which is not easily water soluble.

Solid extracts may be prepared from infusions or tinctures by evaporation to the point where the substance reaches the consistency of honey. Some herbs such as feverfew (used to treat migraine) are prescribed to be eaten in their natural state in salads or sandwiches. The majority of modern preparations however tend to be in the form of pills, tablets or capsules. These are particularly useful for unpleasant tasting remedies such as copaiba.

Continental European, particularly French, practice also includes suppositories. Examples of the use and explanation of the properties of some typical selected herbs follow.

STEPHEN SKINNER

Herbs and Mythology

The wood anemone has an antique mythology through its more colourful Mediterranean relations. The scarlet anemone is often connected with the death of Adonis, representing his spilling blood after he was mortally wounded by a boar; and red flowers were strewn at the ritual celebrating his death and rebirth dating back to 3000 BC. Greek legends suggest that Anemos, the Wind, used to send his plants – the anemones – as heralds of spring. Angelica, a stately plant related to cow parsley, is widespread in Europe and was valued for medicinal purposes; indeed the root was still listed recently in some European pharmacopoeias. In Eastern

Europe there are records of ancient customs in which the plant was carried into towns to the accompaniment of chanting before being offered for sale, which suggests a ritual origin. More recently angelica became associated with the festival of the Annunciation, whence came its Latin specific name – *Angelica archangelica*. It was sometimes linked with St Michael the Archangel and was even called 'The Root of the Holy Ghost'. As such it protected against witchcraft, evil spirits, spells and other enchantments.

The King of Plants

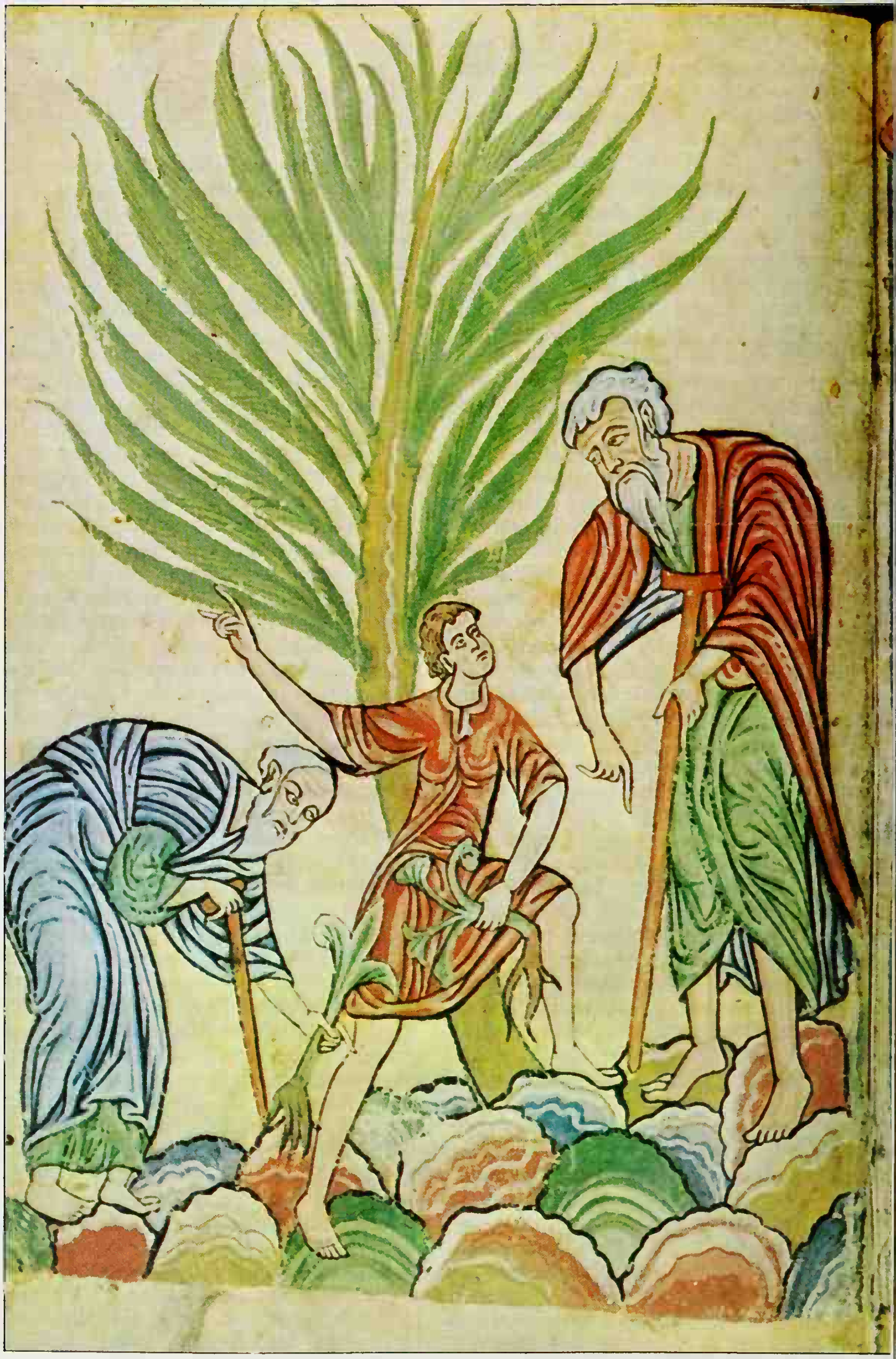
The main mythological interest in the group of plants named after Asclepios, the mythical founder of medicine, is in that of the soma plant, an Indian native which was personified as Soma, one of the Vedic gods. The ninth book of the *Rig-Veda* is devoted to his praise, and here the soma plant is described as the king of the plants. The juice was prepared at a sacred ceremony, by crushing the plant between two millstones, and it was supposed to be a drink of the gods, conferring health, long life and immortality. Under its influence Indra created the universe. In later writings soma became identified with the moon.

Sweet basil is believed by some to have derived its name from the basilisk, the fabulous dragon-like creature that was deadly to anyone who looked at it. This may well be based on an old belief that basil attracted or even begot scorpions. Parkinson (1629) wrote that 'being gently handed it gave a pleasant smell, but being hardly wrung and bruised would breed scorpions'. Culpeper quotes the experience of 'Hilarius, a French physician, who affirms upon his own knowledge, that an acquaintance of his by common smelling of it (basil), had a scorpion breed in his brain'. Culpeper goes on to assure us that basil, connected with scorpions as it is, will draw the poison out of an insect sting or snake-bite. In India, it was sacred to Vishnu and Krishna, and was regarded as a protective plant – even more than that, as a beneficent spirit. A basil leaf on the body of a dead Hindu was his assurance of reaching Paradise. Bush basil, a smaller species, was used in Italy and Moldavia as a love token and in Crete represented 'love washed with tears'. To the ancient Greeks, however, it symbolized hate and misfortune.

Betony is supposedly the original herb of magic and medicine discovered by Chiron the Centaur, used by Asclepios and mentioned by Dioscorides. In a 10th century collection of herbal remedies it cures the elf-sickness. In Pechey's *Compleat Herbal* (1694) nothing seems capable of withstanding it: 'It discusses, attenuates, opens and cleanses'. Culpeper wrote that it was 'a very precious herb . . . most fitting to be kept in a man's house both in syrup, conserve, oil, ointment and plaster.' It was even believed that wounded animals sought it out, and there is a legend that snakes placed in a ring of betony would kill each other. Alas, betony has no real medicinal virtues; as Geoffrey Grigson says, this plant, once believed to be 'a pharmacopoeia in one herb', is really a fraud. Not surprisingly it was believed magically powerful as well, generally useful against evil spirits. It was used in amulets, planted in churchyards, and equally sown around houses.

The pink-flowered bistort gets its name, meaning 'twice-twisted', from allusion to the twisted root, which somewhat resembles a snake. Hence it has the English names snakeweed or adderwort and, according to the principles of sympathetic magic, was regarded as a cure for snakebite and other poisons. Among its other names is Easter ledger, a corruption of *logia*, derived from *Aristolochia*, the name of a group of plants. Now *Aristolochias* are called birthworts because they encourage conception, help childbirth and keep away witches; and bistort also, according to a 16th century herbal, 'hath virtue . . . to cause to retain and conceive'. The Easter ledger pudding, of which bistort was an ingredient, is still eaten in the Lake District around Easter, to help conception.

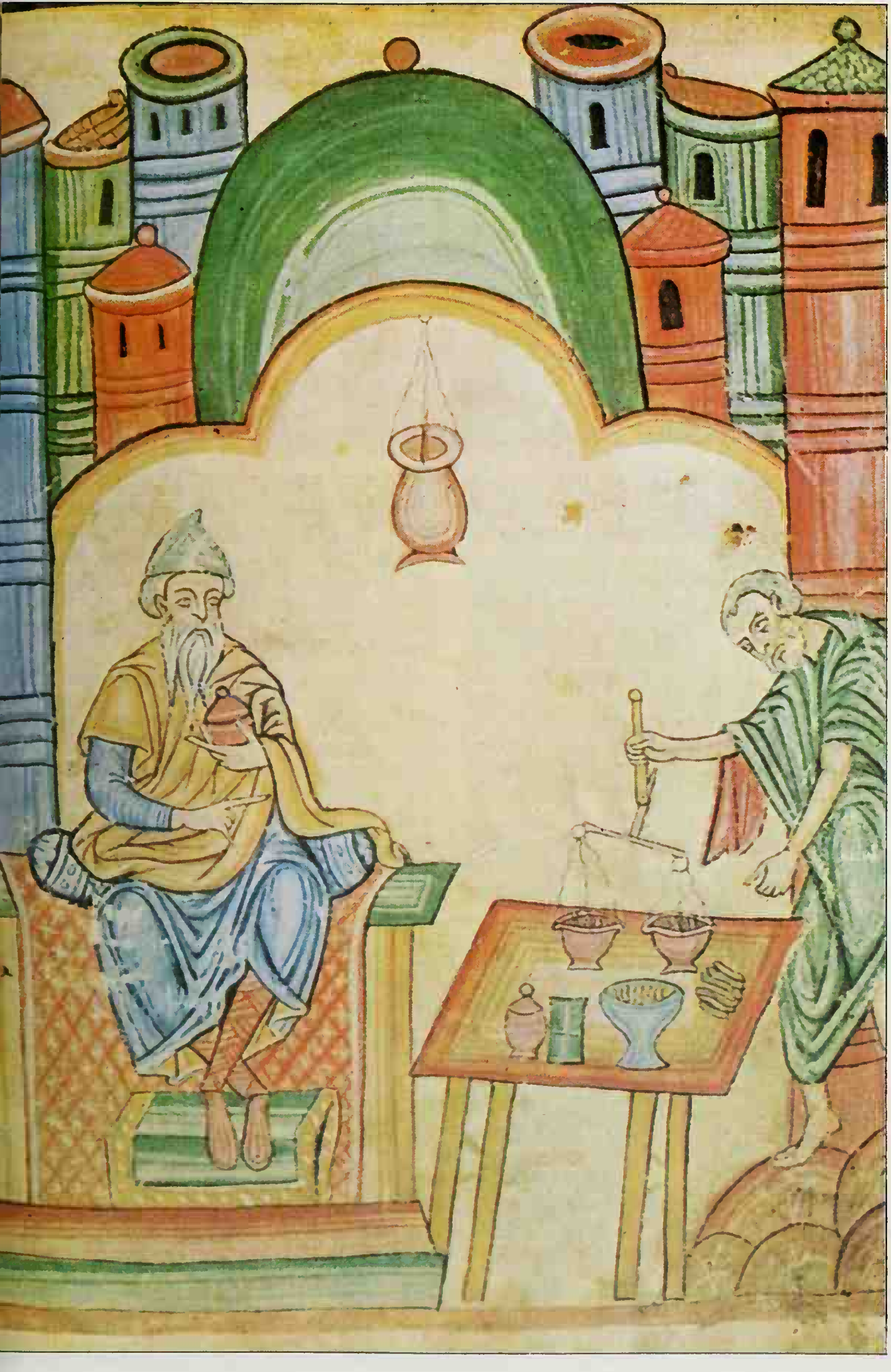
The blackberry, which must have been one of the earliest foods of early human beings, was a holy plant. In the Scottish Highlands they called it the 'blessed bramble', and evil spirits could be kept off



The use of plants for medicinal purposes is as old as civilization, and the first known written record of curative plants was a Sumerian herbal of 2200 BC: illustrations from a 12th century copy of the herbal of Apuleius, showing the digging up of herbs and mixing of medicines by a wreath of bramble, rowan and ivy, while brambles – or alternatively osiers – would be plaited around graves to prevent the dead from rising as ghosts. Legend has it that Christ used bramble to drive the money-changers from the temple and to spur his donkey on his ride to Jerusalem. Various ailments could be cured if the sufferer passed under an archway of bramble rooted at each end.

In autumn, blackberries ferment or mildew. This normally occurs in early October, and in former times Michaelmas Day, now 29 September, fell on 10 October. It was on Michaelmas that the Devil was believed to spit or urinate on the blackberries, because when he was first cast out of heaven by St Michael, he landed on a bramble bush, and consequently curses the plant anew on the anniversary of his fall; for this reason it was not recommendable to eat the fruit after that time. The Irish, however, went on picking blackberries until Hallowe'en, when the puck, or hobgoblin was thought to defile the fruits.

The yellow broom and its relatives were used herbally and, according to John Gerard, author of the famous *Herball* published in 1597, a decoction of broom had tonic properties for the liver and kidneys; he also writes of 'that worthy Prince of famous memory Henry the Eighth, King of England' who 'was wont to drink the distilled water of broom flowers against surfeits, and diseases thereof arising.' Culpeper thought it effective also against dropsy, gout, ague, black jaundice, sciatica and pains in the joints. The custom of wearing a broom sprig in the cap perhaps arose from broom's ancient reputation as a plant both useful to witches and against them, as a magic sleep inducer and as a power in love.



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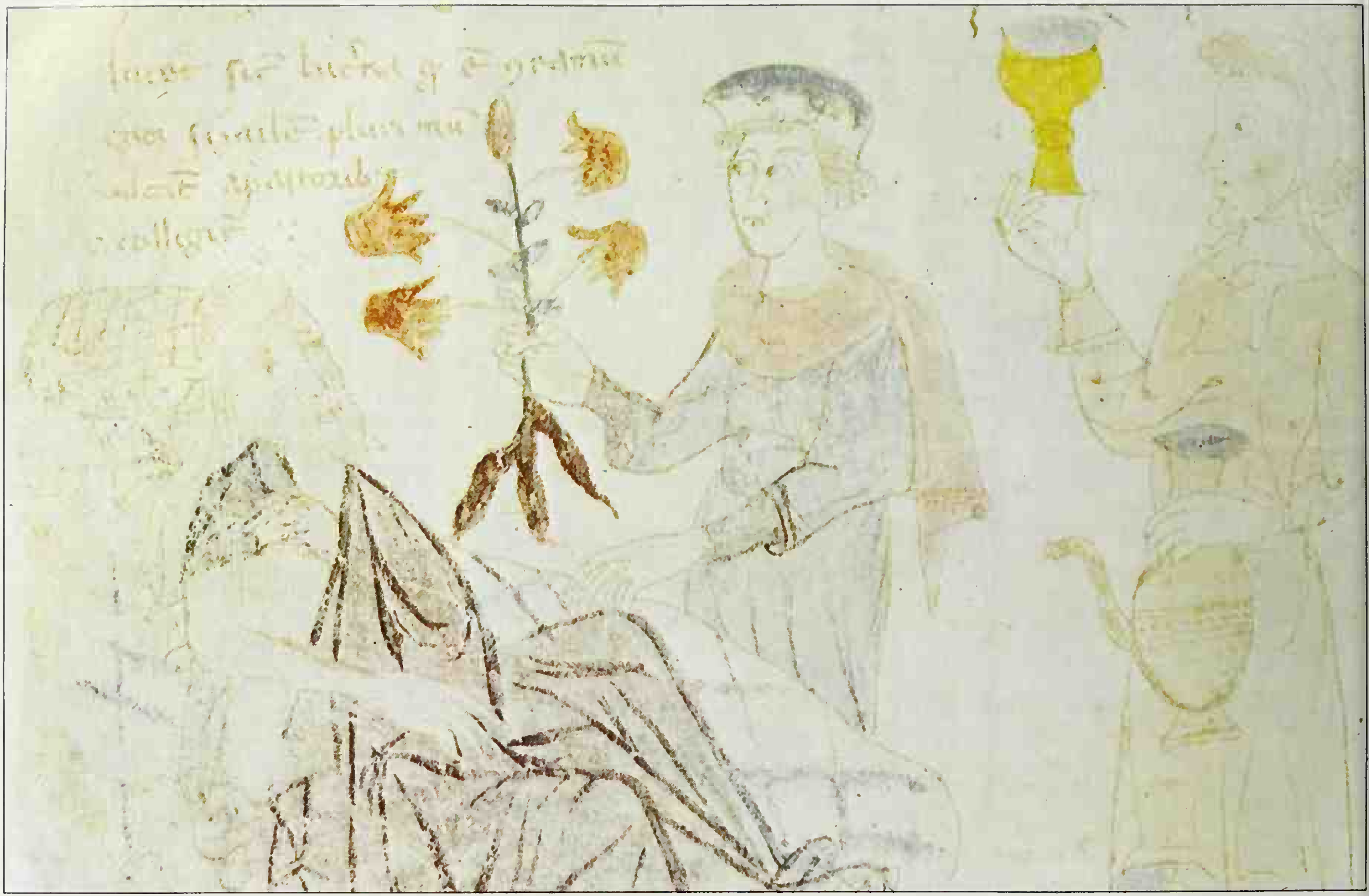
Herb of Beaten Wives

White bryony, which is unrelated to black bryony, is remarkable because it makes enormous roots which, with a little assistance from the witch or herbalist, could pass for mandrake, always a very expensive commodity, which was supposed to make women fertile (see MANDRAKE). Bryony mandrakes in the form of children, sometimes with grass seed sown on the 'head' to provide hair, were to be seen in English herb shops 150 years ago. It is a poisonous plant once used as a purge and recommended for a number of complaints. In Lincolnshire, however, this plant was called womandrake and mandrake was reserved for the black bryony; this also has large roots but they are tubers, the plant being related to the yams. It seems possible that it was known to enchanters and witches as a useful ingredient of potions; in France it was known, among other names, as the 'herb of beaten wives', because, as Gerard tells us, the berries and roots 'do also very quickly waste and consume away black and blue marks that come of bruises and beatings.'

The starry pink-flowered centaury is another herb reputed to have been discovered by Chiron the Centaur, who used it, to quote Gerard, to open 'the stoppings of the liver, gall and spleen', and to cure fever; the family was once named *Chironia*. Centaury was reckoned a powerful herb against wicked spirits and witches, while a translation of a French work on magic, the *Little Albert*, tells us that 'if it be joined with the blood of a female lapwing, or black plover, and put with oil in a lamp, all that compass it about shall believe themselves to be witches, so that one shall believe of another that his head is in heaven and his feet on earth; and if the aforesaid thing be put in the fire when the stars shine it shall appear that the stars run one against the other and fight.' In Ireland, centaury was a sacred and good luck herb, while in the Isle of Man it was called *Keym Chreest*, 'Steps of Christ', because it had supposedly grown on the path to Calvary.

Because the bright blue flowers of the chicory open only when the sun shines, the plant was believed by sympathetic magic to be a cure for failing sight and sore eyes. If gathered according to a special ritual it would make a person invisible and also open locked doors and chests. The ritual was to cut the plant with a gold blade at noon and midnight on St James's Day, 25 July. If a word was spoken during the cutting, the gatherer would surely die.

The Latin name of the cinquefoil is *potentilla*, meaning 'small and powerful'. The herbal and magical species is the creeping cinquefoil or five leaf grass. It is still used to allay fever and as an astringent. Its five-lobed leaves have given it



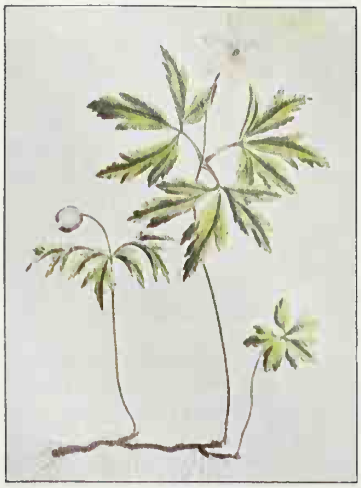
names meaning 'five-fingered' since ancient times and in Gaelic it becomes 'five fingers of Mary'. It was hung in doorways to keep out evil spirits, and can be seen occasionally in carvings on cathedrals. Less pleasant is its association with witches, whose standard ointment, according to Roger Bacon, contained cinquefoil among its many ingredients.

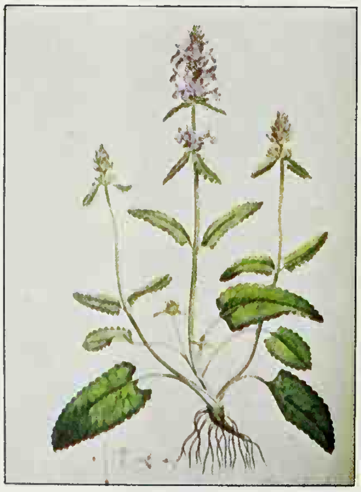
The Devil's-bit scabious, when established, has a tap-root that looks as if it had been bitten off. Gerard explains that 'old fantastic charms report that the devil did bite it for envy because it is a herb that have so many good virtues and is so beneficial to mankind'. Apart from this legend, the plant was widely renowned for dealing with anything from the plague and other diseases to curing snake-bite. In Cornwall, where it was called the 'Devil's button', to pick the plant reputedly invited a nocturnal visit from the devil.

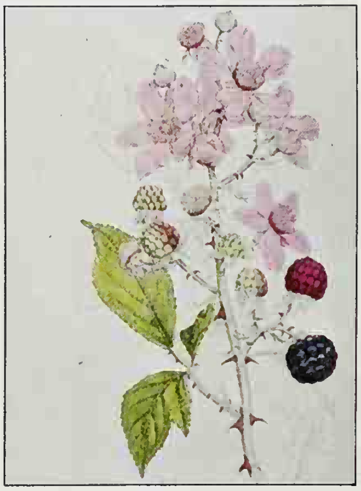
Dill, an annual of the cow parsley family which shares its reputation as an anti-witch plant, is a culinary herb which has an ancient renown and was known to Dioscorides. It was a popular general-purpose drug in the Middle Ages; its name is believed to be derived from old Norse *dilla*, to lull, from its soothing properties, and indeed it is still given to fretful babies to this day. It was also popular for making spells and for keeping off witchcraft.

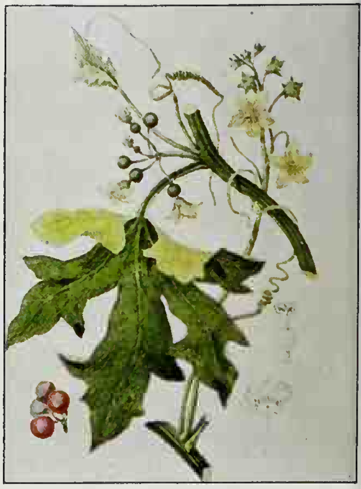
The brilliance of the blue flower of eyebright, coupled with the stripes and speckles on the petals, led to its comparison with a bloodshot eye. Thus it became, according to the Doctrine of Signatures, a cure for sore or failing eyes. In *Paradise Lost,* the great poem by John Milton, we find the Archangel Michael, after Adam's fall, anointing his eyes with a mixture of eyebright and rue with three drops from the Well of Life.

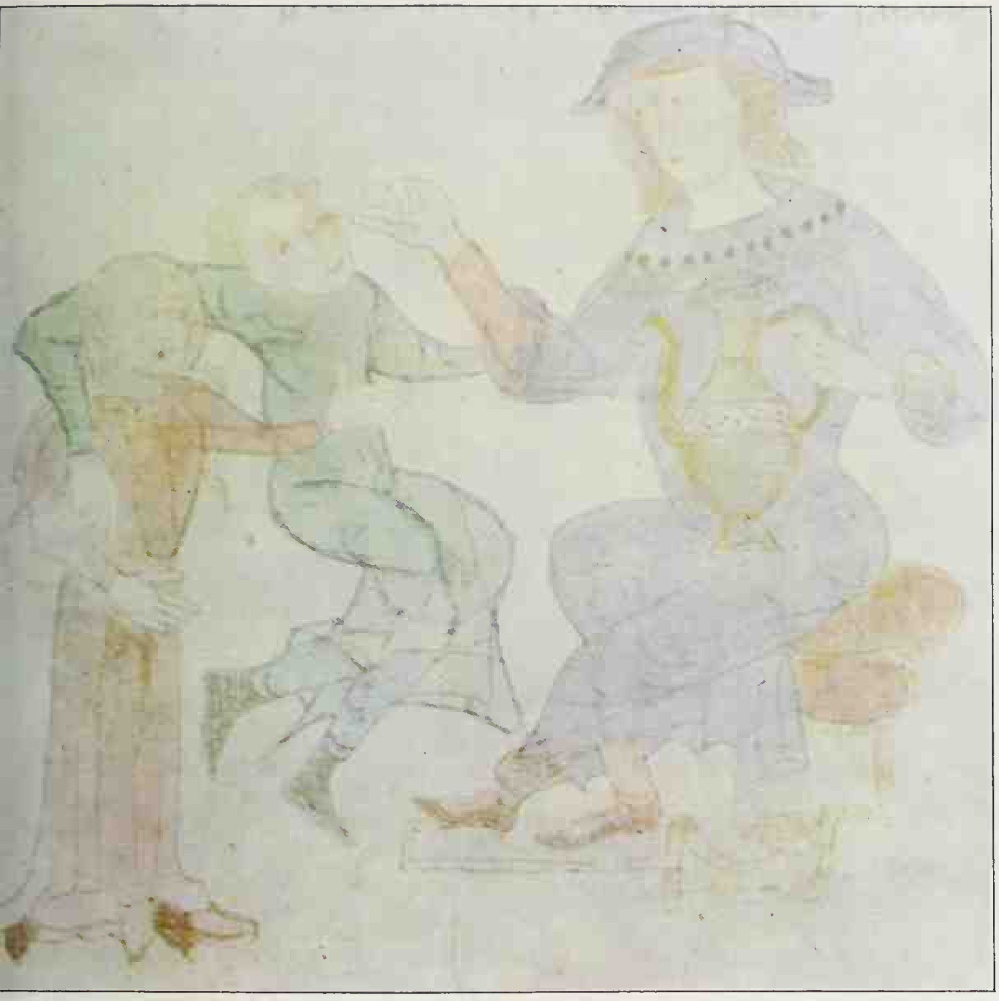
A herb with genuine wind-expelling properties, fennel was one of the herbs used in medieval times to keep away evil spirits, especially on Midsummer's Eve when, in company with herbs like St John's Wort, it was hung over doorways. Keyholes blocked with fennel seed prevented the entry of ghosts. It was cultivated by the Romans, as in modern Italy, as a flavouring and a related species for its succulent roots; it











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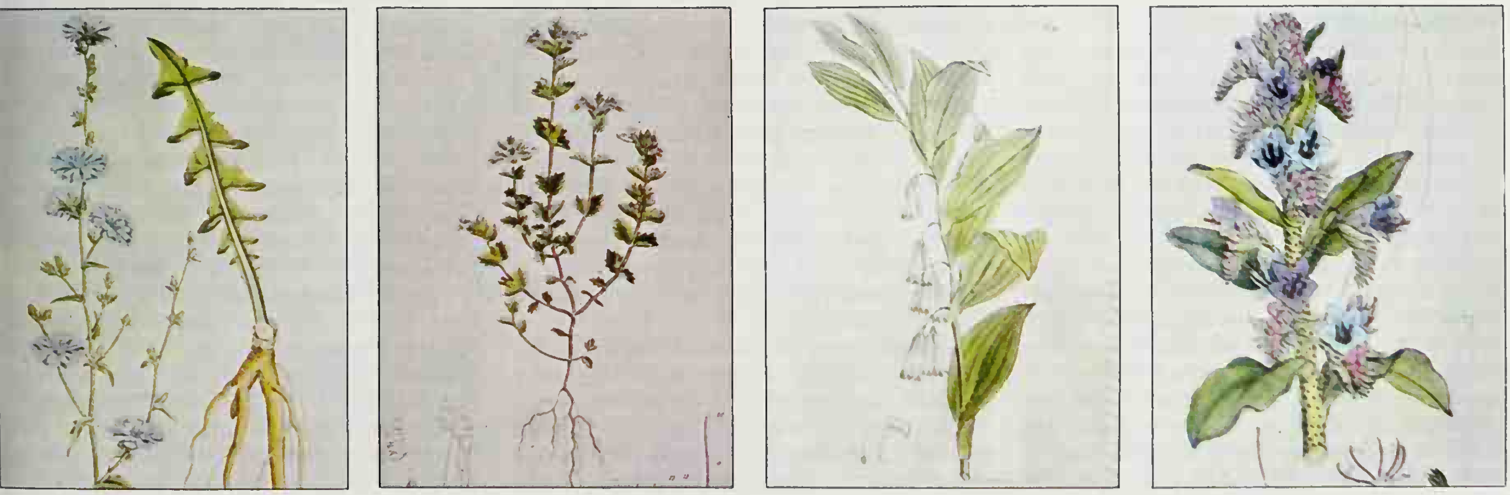
Facing page above A doctor brings a sick man peonies, to cure him of epilepsy *Left* The soothing properties of the aromatic rosemary were considered helpful for sore or inflamed eyes: two illustrations from a 14th century herbal. Each herb had its own particular virtue and legendary lore *Below* from left to right: anemones, which according to a Greek myth sprang from the blood of Adonis after he was mortally wounded by a boar, were used to cure colds, gout and leprosy; betony was believed to cure almost all ills, both of the body and of the soul, and it was a powerful protection against witchcraft and evil spirits; blackberry brambles were legendarily used by Christ to drive out the money-changers from the temple, and children were at one time passed through a bramble arch as a cure for rickets; bryony, used by witches in spells, was taken as a purgative and is still considered a potent aphrodisiac; chicory was credited with great magical virtues, including the power of invisibility and of opening locked chests and subterannean caverns for those in search of treasure; eyebright, which was rubbed on Adam's eyes to permit him to see the future mortality of man, is still used by modern herbalists for eye complaints; Solomon's seal, which has the mark of a magic hexagram on its roots, was a useful anodyne for the after-effects of a brawl, while its flowers were used in love potions; in popular tradition viper's bugloss was believed to help lumbago and increase milk production in nursing mothers

was known to Pliny as a cure for many complaints, especially for improving sight. He records that serpents were known to eat it or rub themselves against it, on casting their skins, in order to 'sharpen their sight'. It was believed to aid longevity and to improve strength and courage.

The Latin name for the foxglove is *digitalis*, formed from a word meaning fingers. The foxglove is so called in English because the fox was given the 'gloves' by the fairies so that he could invade the chicken run without fear of capture. It has always been associated with fairies and elves: if the 'little people' put on these 'gloves' they could do almost whatever they liked. It was considered dangerous to cut foxglove, but once you had done so it was a defence against the little people; in Wales the plant's juice was rubbed into the floor in the form of a cross for this purpose. It could in addition be used to kill a changeling child, either by giving it 'tea' made from the leaves (which would be poisonous) or by rubbing the changeling with the foxglove juice. In Scotland it was considered unlucky to have foxglove in the house, or on board ship. Some of the other names of the foxglove, such as 'deadman's fingers', 'thimbles' or 'bells', probably come from the belief that the souls of the dead inhabit the flowers. Variously used as medicine, the plant became well known for its powers as a purge and to make one vomit, which led to its serious investigation by Dr William Withering. He noted its effect on the heart, and digitalis came to play an important part in treating heart disease.

The insignificant 'herb Robert' has been known by over a hundred local names in Britain alone. The plant is associated with Robin Goodfellow and his counterparts in parts of Europe, the red, hairy appearance of this plant being thought to resemble the red-faced and bushy-haired goblin.

Just as it was unlucky to offend Robin, calamities could follow the destruction or picking of herb Robert; its Cumberland name was 'death-come-quickly'. And just as Robin Goodfellow's plant was herb Robert, so his bird was the robin, similarly unlucky to kill; the plant is also known as 'poor Robin', 'little Robin', and has similar names in many countries.



Su Gooders/Linnean Society

St John's Girdle

Mugwort, a pungent relation of wormwood, has long been considered to have both medicinal and magical properties: it was known as *Mater Herbarum*, mother of herbs, and throughout Europe as St John's Herb. Some believed that John the Baptist wore a girdle of mugwort during his sojourn in the wilderness. Like St John's Wort it was picked on St John's Eve, purified in the magic bonfires, and placed over doors to keep away evil. Such use was certainly still active in the Isle of Man during the last century. Besides this powerful protective magic, mugwort – very much a wayside herb – was reputed to prevent weariness in a traveller who carried it with him.

The tubers of many species of orchid and its relations are still gathered in many parts of Europe and in Asia for the preparation of salep, a nutritive flour-like substance usually taken mixed with water, and once carried on long sea voyages as an emergency ration. The name of this family comes from the Greek word *orchis* meaning testicle, for these plants have a pair of tubers, one for this year's growth, one for next. The resulting symbolism and magic are doubtless plain: Dioscorides recorded how women in Thessaly would make a salep with goat's milk, using the full, new tuber if they wanted to excite desire, the emptying old one to discourage.

It was also believed that the sex of children could be controlled by similar means, male children being born if the man had eaten of large new tubers, girls if the women had eaten small old tubers. All over Europe orchids became aphrodisiacs; one kind was at one time known as Satyrion, after the lecherous satyrs. The early purple orchid is the 'long purples' in Ophelia's garland – 'to which the liberal shepherds give a grosser name, but which cold maids do dead men's fingers call'.

A relation of the orchid, the 'autumn lady's tresses', was called sweet cullion by Gerard (cullion, a word used by Chaucer, means testicle) and he remarks how 'the full and sappy roots of Lady traces eaten or boiled in milk and drunk, provoke venery, nourish and strengthen the body, and be good for such as we are fallen into a consumption of fever hectic'. There we have the whole gamut of the herbal use of orchids – and all quite unjustified.

The Powers of Parsley

Parsley was not regarded by the ancients as a herb; it had connections both noble and funereal. Thus it was made into wreaths at games – dried parsley at the Isthmain games, fresh at the Nemean. The Greeks also strewed it on graves, and the phrase 'to be in need of parsley' was used of people near death.

There is a legend that, because it often takes so long to germinate, it goes nine times to the Devil before appearing above ground. In some places one had to sow it on Good Friday to counteract the Devil's influence, and it was unlucky to sow it at any other time. In some quarters it was thought unlucky to grow parsley at all, and there is still a widespread belief that parsley should never be transplanted. Other sayings suggest, according to locality, that parsley grows best where the wife 'wears the trousers', or for an honest man, or alternatively, only for the wicked. To plant parsley might, if you were a young woman in Lincolnshire, result in your bearing a child soon; but if you did get into this plight before marriage you might also be able to rescue yourself from it by eating parsley three times daily for three weeks.

The reason we nowadays use parsley as a garnish is its long reputation as an antidote to poison, so that to place it on a dish of food was seen as a token of trust. In William Turner's *New Herball* of 1597 there is the delightful suggestion that 'the seed taken beforehand helpeth men that have weak brains to bear drink better.' More certainly, chewing parsley can help counter the strong odours of garlic and also prevent tears coming to the eyes of a person who is chopping onions.

The peony's medicinal properties were known to the ancients and it is named after Paeon, who is recorded as a physician, even to the gods. It was, in ancient times, regarded as of divine origin; it would keep off evil spirits and storms, and protect in particular shepherds and their flocks, farmers and their crops. It was believed to be dangerous to dig up, like the mandrake, and similar precautions had to be taken when extracting it. It was further thought necessary to make sure that no woodpecker was nearby or the gatherer would lose his or her sight.

Sage for Long Life

The plantain weed has been used for a great many ailments, and herbalists still recommend it. In Northern Ireland the plantain is still known as *Slan-lus*, 'healing herb', and in Scotland as 'healing blade'. In earlier days the way plantain stood up to being trodden on suggested its use for wounds and bruises and Dioscorides recommended it for this. According to the Anglo-Saxon *Charm of the Nine Herbs*, plantain, here referred to as 'waybread', was reputed not only to resist crushing by chariot wheels and the trampling of bulls but to withstand 'the venom that flies through the air, and the loathed things that through the land rove'.

The handsome, aromatic rosemary has a long list of supposed medicinal virtues and also many holy and magical attributes. It was supposed to be effective against the dreaded plague; it was believed in various differing recipes to remove the effects of poison, to assuage gout, to make hair grow, to cure giddiness, to improve sanity, reduce anxiety, and avoid nightmares. It was until recently common for mourners to drop sprigs of rosemary on a coffin to show that they would not forget the dead person – 'There's rosemary for remembrance,' as Ophelia famously said.

Rosemary was also used at weddings as a symbol of fidelity; it was woven into bridal wreaths, and sprigs of the plant would be dipped into the wine to ensure the happiness of the married pair. From there it is a small step to marriage divination; there were several ways for a young woman to foretell her future husband by using rosemary. Rosemary is said to grow well for the righteous; it is also said only to flourish where the wife rules the household. Among its other attributes was the affording of protection against all kinds of spirits, physical injury, thunder and lightning; it could also help special enterprises to suceed and renew youth.

Sage, now used mainly as a culinary herb in Britain, is still used medicinally in the United States, mainly as a gargle. It has an ancient reputation for healing and was thought to confer long life. There is a tradition that, as the plant flourishes or dies, so the owner's business will succeed or fail.

Solomon's seal is said to bear a symbol on its roots, the two interwoven triangles which make up the Star of David, the magic pentacle which scares off evil spirits. However, though Gerard at one point suggests that this symbol may be imagined occasionally upon the fleshy roots, elsewhere he states that the name comes from the plant's supposed capacities to seal and heal up 'green wounds'. He leads on to explain how Solomon's seal 'taketh away in one night, or two at the most, any bruise, black or blue spots gotten by falls or women's wilfulness, stumbling upon their hasty husbands' fists or such like.' In the Middle Ages the plant was also called seal of St John or of the Virgin. Besides its supposed value against bruises it was also believed to knit bones together, and was given for consumption (tuberculosis), bleeding of the lungs and other haemorrages. The white flowers, by contrast, were used in love potions.

Tarragon is also known as 'little dragon', and is reputed, like the pungent mugworts and wormwoods, to have sprung up where the serpent passed on its banishment from Eden. Dragons could be thought of as both protective and terror-inspiring, and a dragon plant was protective, in particular with the ability to cure snake-bite.

Viper's bugloss derives its remarkable English name simply enough from the resemblance of its seeds to a viper's head; this was made by Dioscorides who therefore believed it both a cure and preventative of snake-bite. Yarrow is noted for its wound-healing powers and is also called bloodwort, soldier's woundwort and knight's milfoil. It also had great magic power and was anciently widely regarded as a herb dedicated to the Devil.

A. J. HUXLEY

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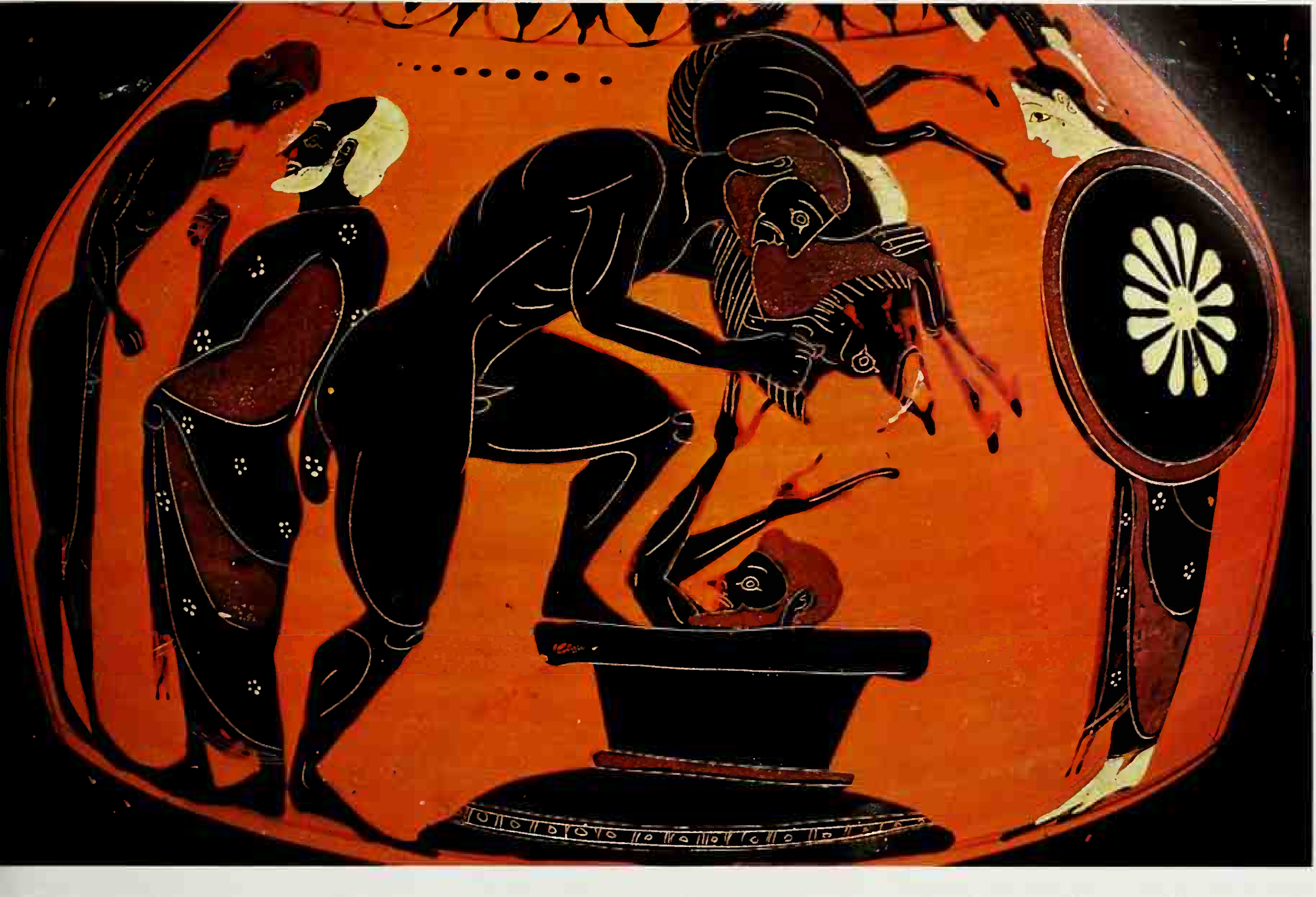


Michael Holford

The gods decreed that Hercules should perform twelve abours imposed upon him by Eurystheus, the ruler of Mycene. Commanded to bring back alive the wild boar of Mt Erymanthus, Hercules captured it in deep snow; according to one version of the legend, the sight of the beast so terrified Eurystheus that he hid himself in a wine jar: Greek vase in the British Museum

Though Hercules was fathered by Zeus and eventually became a god himself, his courage, physical strength and bursts of fury made him a peculiarly human hero; a quality for which he was chosen to be the special representative of the gods in their dealings with mankind

HERCULES

THE GREATEST HERO of Greek legend, Hercules (in Greek, Herakles) was the only one to become an Olympian god. His legend is complex and widespread, being associated in Greece with Boeotia and the Peloponnese, while some of his exploits are set in eastern and western regions remote from Greece and imperfectly known. He was adopted by the Romans because of his doings in Italy.

Hercules is one of the great wanderers, like Perseus, the Argonauts and Odysseus. His legend, like theirs, contains material of great vitality which comes from folktale and supernatural myth. Only with these more than human qualities could he have ended as not only a god but as one of the most important gods during the last years of paganism. His deeds, even though he sometimes leads an army, are individual feats of strength. Attended usually by his squire, Iolaus, he faces perils and monsters too great for human valour.

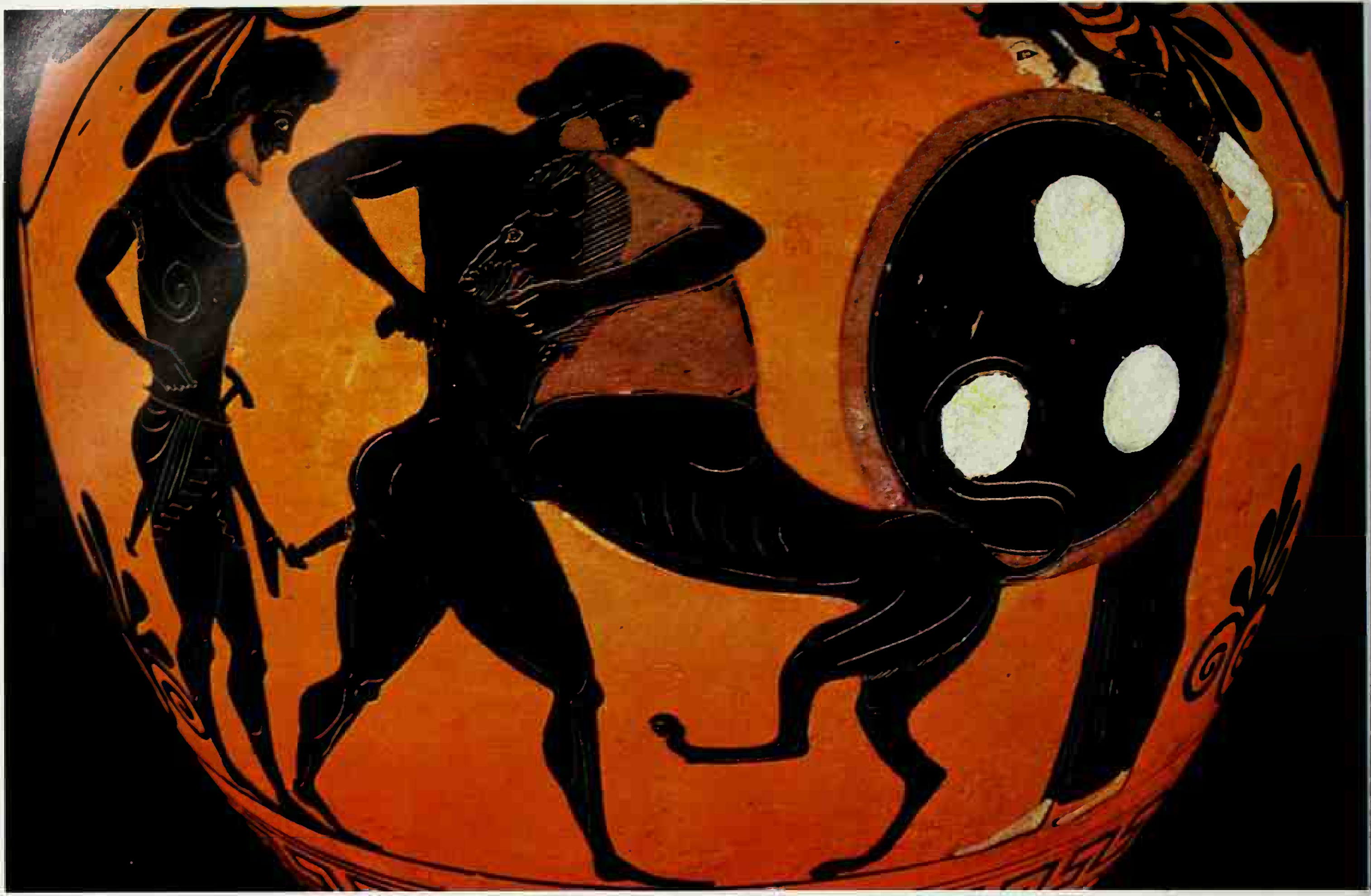
In this he is like the Mesopotamian Gilgamesh or the English Beowulf, whose greatest deeds were not done on human battlefields. Such primeval figures are but little modified by the conventional traditions of a heroic age. Yet his most famous deeds, the Labours, were not done by him as a free agent but by order of the unworthy ruler Eurystheus, whom the gods decreed that he should serve. In his own character Hercules was noble as well as valiant but he was subject to fits of fury or madness, in which he committed terrible crimes.

His name is puzzling but evidently significant. There is no reason to disbelieve those ancient writers who interpreted it as 'glory of Hera'; yet Hera (the Latin Juno) queen of heaven, appears as his relentless enemy during all his earthly life. Some light on its original sense may perhaps be got from the myth of Gilgamesh, who was persecuted all his life by the Nature goddess and queen of heaven, Ishtar (see GILGAMESH). She had first desired Gilgamesh for her lover, but he refused and so was punished. It appears that some Babylonian and Sumerian kings were regarded as official consorts of Ishtar. Does the name Hercules descend from a remote time when some Greek kings were regarded as Hera's consorts?

During the 19th century some scholars argued that Hercules, who was certainly in classical times a favourite of the Dorian Greeks, was originally a Dorian hero only, and was no more than an intruder in legends inherited from the Mycenean Greeks whom the Dorian invaders overthrew. But although Dorian chiefs claimed later to be descendants of the exiled children of Hercules (the Heraclidae) who departed northwards, there is not sufficient reason to tear Hercules loose from his pre-Dorian setting, which represents the actual Mycenean age of prehistory.

Early poetry dealing with Hercules has come down to us in fragments or in allusions only. A complete cycle of myth concerning him may be assumed with certainty, but it is not likely that this was well ordered or consistent. Nor can it be shown that there was a complete cycle of formed poetry about him. However, the distinction between legend and its literary embodiment is hard to draw for ages when literature itself was oral. Our material of all dates does make possible a general outline of Hercules's life through his Labours until his death or deification. But there is no definite relation between his stray exploits and the well-known Labours which he carved out for Eurystheus. The clearest among continuous narratives are those of the late compilers of mythology, Diodorus (1st century AD) in a legendary part of his *Universal History* and Apollodorus (1st century BC) as represented in the summary *Library of Mythology* attributed to him.

Hercules was born at Thebes to Alcmena, wife of Amphitryon who had come from Tiryns to live at Thebes. His father was



In order to accomplish his first Labour and bring Eurystheus the skin of the invulnerable Nemean lion, Hercules stunned the animal with his club and then strangled it: Greek vase in the British Museum

Zeus who took the form of Amphitryon, then absent, for a supernaturally prolonged embrace. At the same birth Alcmena bore Hercules's twin brother Iphicles, the son of Amphitryon. Hera in her jealousy sent two serpents to kill the infants as they lay cradled in a shield, but Hercules strangled them. As he grew up, he was taught chariot-driving, wrestling and the use of weapons, particularly the bow; Linus, brother of Orpheus, also taught him music. When Linus struck his pupil once to discipline him, Hercules in a fit of temper killed him with the lyre. He was sent to guard cattle, and while on watch killed the lion of Cythaeron, whose skin he afterwards wore complete with the head as helmet or hood.

When Erginus, king of Orchomenus in Boeotia, sent envoys to demand tribute from the Thebans, Hercules outraged the envoys, so that Erginus made war. Hercules killed him and compelled the Minyan inhabitants of Orchomenus to pay double the tribute that they had exacted from the Thebans. As a prize for valour, Creon, king of Thebes, gave him his daughter Megara to be his wife. By her he had three sons but later, driven mad by Hera, he killed them.

When he recovered his reason, he went into exile and inquired of the Delphic oracle where he should live. He was ordered to settle in Tiryns, which was his family's original home, and to serve its overlord, Eurystheus of Mycene, for 12 years; in some accounts his servitude was decreed even before his birth. He was to perform the Labours that would be imposed on him, but after these had been accomplished he would be made immortal.

The number and details of the Labours vary in different sources, but eventually a canon of 12 was recognized. The earliest evidence for this total appears in the reliefs on the pediments of the temple of Zeus at Olympia carved during the 5th century BC. Firstly, Hercules was to bring back the skin of the invulnerable lion of Nemea in Argolis; on finding that his arrows had no effect, he stunned the lion with his club and then choked it. Next he had to kill the Hydra, the many-headed water-snake that infested the marshy plain of Lerna in Argolis; it had nine heads, the middle one being immortal, while the rest grew again whenever Hercules smashed them with his club, until Iolaus burned their roots. Hercules cut off and buried the immortal head, but this feat was not accepted by Eurystheus because of Iolaus's help.

Thirdly, Hercules was set the task of catching the Ceryneian hind and bringing it from the border of Arcadia to Mycene. It had golden horns and was sacred to Artemis (Diana). After hunting it for a year, Hercules shot it as it was crossing the River Ladon, and was eventually allowed by Apollo and Artemis to carry it alive to Eurystheus. His next Labour was to bring back alive the boar of Mt Erymanthus in Arcadia. On his way Hercules was entertained by centaurs but later fell out with them, so that he had to disperse them with arrows and flaming brands; he caught the boar in deep snow and carried it to Mycene.

The fifth task was to carry out the cattle dung from the stables of Augeas, king of Elis, in a single day; the stables had not been cleaned for many years. When Hercules arrived, Augeas promised him a tenth of the cattle if he accomplished this. He did so by diverting the rivers Alpheus and Peneus through the stables. But Augeas broke his promise and would not pay the reward; later Hercules made war on Augeas, killed him, and devastated the country. Hercules next had to rid the Stymphalian lake in Arcadia of a great flock of birds that used their feathers as darts; he did so by scaring them with castanets of bronze presented by Athene and shot some of them on the wing.

The seventh Labour was to bring to Mycene the bull given to Minos by Poseidon (Neptune) but not sacrificed as promised, so that Poseidon drove it wild. Hercules captured it and brought it to Mycene, but Eurystheus let it go. After this Hercules had to bring to Mycene the man-eating mares of Diomedes, king of the Bistones in Thrace. After fighting with the Bistones, Hercules succeeded in carrying off the mares to Eurystheus. The next task was to bring back the girdle of Hippolyta, the queen of the Amazons, who lived by the River Thermodon in Asia Minor. When Hercules's

Hercules in his greatness and his fits of madness is quoted as a legendary example of the melancholic man, the ancient forerunner of our man of genius

ship arrived at Themiscyra, her capital, Hippolyta promised to give him the girdle. But Hera, disguised as an Amazon persuaded the women that Hercules intended to carry off their queen. When the Amazons charged down on horseback to the ship, Hercules killed Hippolyta and set sail with the girdle to Mycene. On his way back he set free Hesione, princess of Troy, who had been chained on a rock as prey for a sea monster. The monster had been sent to ravage the country by Poseidon and Apollo, who had fortified Troy for King Laomedon and had been cheated of their reward. Hercules killed the monster, but was also cheated; later he besieged and took Troy.

The tenth Labour was to fetch the cattle of Geryon from the island of Erytheia in the far west. Geryon had three heads and bodies joined at the waist, below which again he had three pairs of legs and feet. Hercules journeyed through Libya, destroying many wild beasts, until he came to the western end of the Mediterranean, where he erected two great rocks known as the Pillars of Hercules (Gibraltar and Ceuta on Mt Hacho in Morocco) before going on to Tartessus and Erytheia. He crossed to Erytheia using the boat of the sun god, and killed Geryon, his servant and his hound. Returning eastward with the cattle by Iberia and Liguria to Italy, he crossed to Sicily in pursuit of a bull stolen by Eryx, son of Poseidon, whom he killed. He then drove the cattle round the Ionian (Adriatic) sea, but lost many of them when a gad-fly sent by Hera dispersed them about Thrace. When he brought them to Mycene, Eurystheus sacrificed them to Hera.

After this exploit, Hercules had to fetch the golden apples of the Hesperides, nymphs who lived in the far west of Libya, though sometimes they were thought to dwell in the far north of Europe. The apples were guarded by a gigantic many-headed serpent, usually said to have been immortal. According to some accounts Hercules persuaded the Titan Atlas, who held up the heavens on his shoulders, to approach and charm the serpent and so bring the apples for him, while he supported the burden. The last of Hercules's Labours was to fetch the three-headed hound Cerberus from the entrance of Hades; Pluto allowed Cerberus to be carried off by Hercules provided he was brought back again.

On one of his journeys, Hercules was bringing home a new wife, Deianeira, when the centaur Nessus offered to carry her over a swollen river. Nessus attempted to rape Deianeira and was shot down by Hercules with his poisoned arrows. Before he died, Nessus told Deianeira to preserve his blood, saying that it would be a charm for reviving Hercules's love for her if it should fail. Some time later Hercules came home from the wars with a captured girl, Iole, and Deianeira in her distress gave Hercules a garment stained with the blood of Nessus to wear. The tunic stuck to his skin and spread deadly poison through his body. Maddened with pain, Hercules had himself burned on a pyre on the top of Mount Oeta. The myth held that after his death he became an Olympian god, was reconciled to Hera and married Hebe, daughter of Zeus and Hera. But a shadow of him went to Hades.

A number of well-known works, passages or fragments within surviving poetry and drama deal with Hercules. Homer says that Zeus swore irrevocably, when the birth of Hercules was expected, that on that day the next child born of his own blood would rule over all that dwelt about him. Hera, by delaying the arrival of Hercules, contrived that the first birth should be that of Eurystheus.

Hesiod's *Theogony* tells how Hercules killed the eagle that fed on Prometheus's liver, of his origin, of his killing of Geryon, and of his marriage to Hebe and immortal bliss. The poem *Shield of Hercules*, attributed to Hesiod, relates the battle between Hercules and Cycnus, son of Ares, and describes Hercules's elaborate shield.

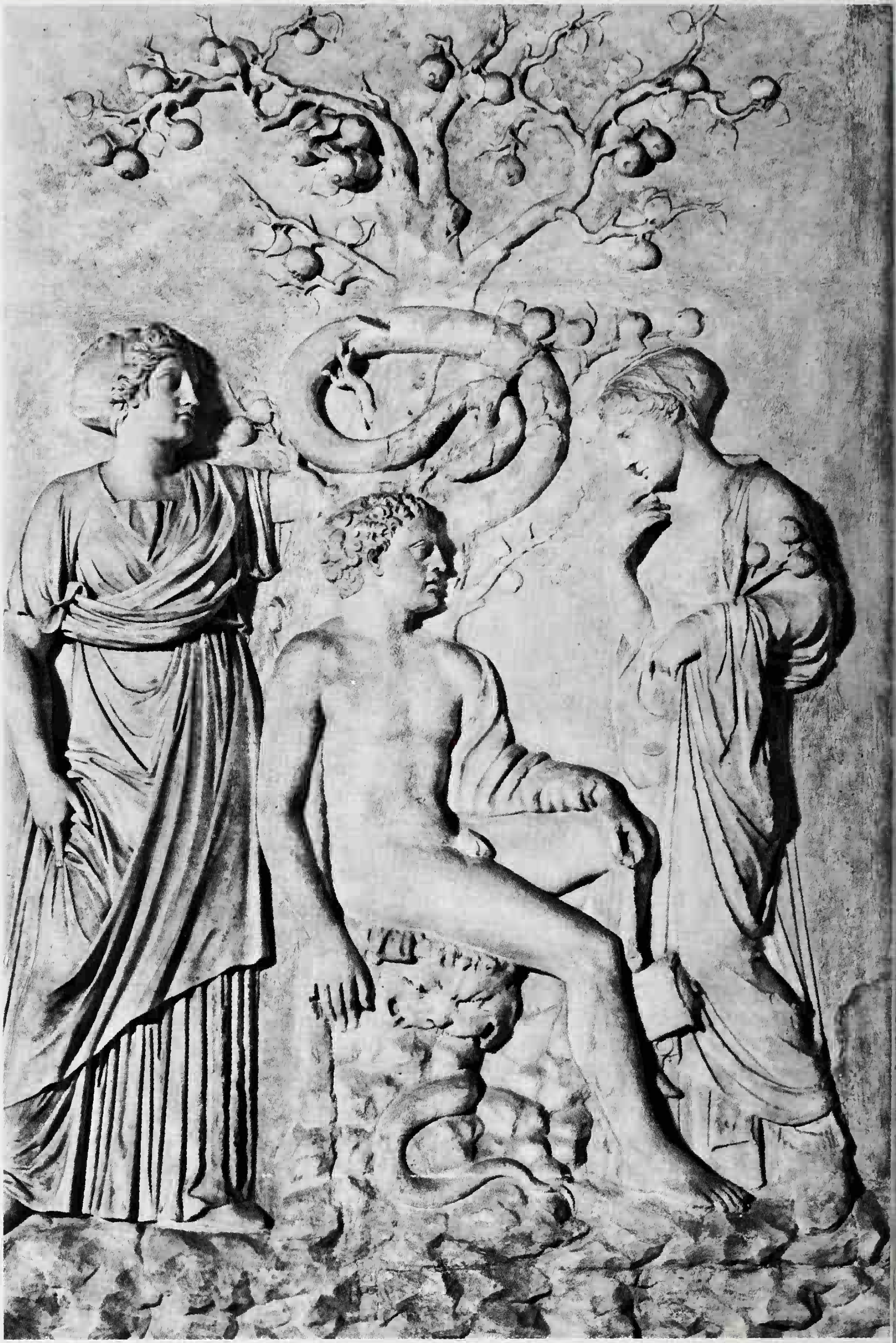
Among lyric poets, Stesichorus of Himera in Sicily told of Hercules's expedition to fetch the cattle of Geryon. Pindar tells vividly the stories of his birth and killing of the serpants; of his expedition against Troy; of his journey through Libya and his wrestling with the giant Antaeus; and of his founding of the Isthmian and also the Olympic Games. He mentions his journey to the Ister (Danube) to get an olive spray to plant, so that he himself and later athletes might have shade. Other details given by Pindar include Hercules's gluttony, his eating of two oxen seized from the plough and, curiously, his short stature.

Among dramatists, the *Trachiniae* of Sophocles covers all the events leading up

The Strength of Ten

Hercules sighed gustily. 'The poor child is an orphan. I killed his father myself. This was what happened. I was wandering through western Thessaly on some expedition or other, and one day I happened to feel hungry. I came across a Dryopian farmer ploughing a fallow field in a sheltered valley, and uttering, for luck, the usual obscene imprecations. I saluted him with: 'My lucky ploughman, I am so hungry that I could eat an ox.' He answered, with a smile, but continuing to curse, that I should at any rate not eat his ox until the field had been ploughed and harrowed too. 'Holy Serpents,' I cried, losing patience, 'I will, if I like.' 'Hold hard,' said he. 'I am Theiodamas the Dryopian. I must ask you not to speak to me in that peremptory way.' I answered: 'To the crows with your "peremptory." I am Hercules of Tiryns and I always say, do, and get, just whatever I please. At Delphi the other day I told the Pythoness exactly what I have just told you; but she refused to believe me. I pulled the sacred tripod from under her and carried it out of the shrine. "Now," said I, "if needs must I will have an oracle of my own." Ho, ho! That soon brought her to her senses.' But Theiodamas either had never heard me or else could not believe that I was I. He threatened me with his ox-goad, so I gave him a friendly tap with my club and cracked his skull like an eggshell. Alas, I never meant to kill him. I never know my strength, that is my curse. The same thing happened to me when I was a boy learning to play the lyre, and my music-teacher, a pompous fool named Linus, rapped my knuckles and told me that my fingering was incorrect. I gave him a playful whack with the lyre and dashed out his brains. A pure accident, that I swear! I pleaded self-defence and the affair blew over, but I have never touched a lyre since.

Robert Graves *Hercules, My Shipmate*



For his eleventh Labour, Hercules was ordered to fetch the golden apples guarded by the Hesperides, nymphs who lived in a fabulous garden in the far west: Hercules and the Hesperides, relief in the Villa Albani, Rome

to the death of Hercules on the pyre on Mount Oeta, but contains no mention of his deification, though he appears as a god at the end of *Philoctetes*. Euripides's *Mad Hercules* presents the insane frenzy of Hercules as he is struck by the demon Lyssa, sent by Hera, and tells of how he kills his children. His *Alcestis* shows Hercules first as a greedy, cheerful and insensitive guest in the grief-stricken house of Admetus, after the death of his wife Alcestis, but later as the deliverer who restores Alcestis after defeating Death. The cruder aspects of Hercules are shown in Aristophanes's *Frogs*, where everyone in the underworld remembers his plundering gluttony.

Ambassador of Zeus

Among prose writers, the Sophist Prodicus, (c 5th century BC) appears to have originated the idea of the Choice of Hercules, made between the lives offered to him by the seductive figure of Vice and the austere one of Virtue. This was the beginning of the long history of Hercules as a symbolical figure used by the philosophers. He was a useful subject for sermons because he was a famous folk hero everywhere in the Greek world and had ended in unique glory.

Hercules's slow change of character from hero to something more was foreshadowed by the Athenian orator Isocrates (436–338 BC), who celebrates his intelligence. In Aristotle's *Problems*, in a discussion of the melancholic man, the ancient forerunner of our man of genius, Hercules in his greatness and in his fits of madness is quoted as a legendary example of the type. In Roman times the Stoic philosopher Dio of Prusa developed the idea of the Choice of Hercules as one between tyranny and kingship. Hercules was moving toward being a pagan saint. Among the Stoics he became a symbol of divine energy and order.

Meanwhile the Romans themselves had eagerly adopted Hercules. This is shown in literature by the litany of his exploits which appears in Virgil's *Aeneid*. A peculiarly Roman addition was his killing of the monster Cacus who had driven off the cattle of Geryon to his cave in the Aventine Hill. His sufferings and his death on the pyre as treated by Ovid and Seneca make explicit in another way his change to divine nature by telling how the pyre burned away only the mortal part of him.

Hercules continues to grow in stature and in wisdom in late philosophical and religious literature. Because he had fought and suffered as a man battling against beasts and monsters and hardship, he became a saviour who had much greater appeal than the traditional Olympians who had never endured the mortal state. He came to be regarded as the special representative of Zeus or Jupiter in dealing with mankind.

The development had gone far by the 4th century AD when Christianity was made the official faith of the Empire by Constantine. Scholars have noticed an affinity between the legendary Hercules, who had acquired a new religious and philosophical significance, and the Christ of Christian theology. Though some have exaggerated this, there was certainly an analogy between the Herculean theology and Christian belief, which was influenced by Stoic modes of thought. In some writings of the apostate Emperor Julian, Hercules appears to be a figure maintained as a rival to Christ. But Hercules was not more than a legendary or mythical figure and no more than one of many gods. He could not really rival Christ, the historical saviour and manifestation of one God.
(See also HERO.)

E. D. PHILLIPS

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Among Christians heresy was a grave evil which must be mercilessly rooted out; in Spain, during the Inquisition, the first Grand Inquisitor was credited with burning at least 2000 heretics

HERESY

TO MOST PEOPLE the word 'heresy' is connected with the Christian religion. It is also linked with the Inquisition, as the notorious means by which the Christian Church sought to exterminate heresy, a view that is soundly based in historical fact. However, before dealing with the subject in this context, it would be well to look first at earlier forms of the idea.

The English word is derived from the Greek *hairesis*, meaning 'selection' or 'choice'. It was most notably used in the Graeco-Roman world to describe adherence to ideas or beliefs of a philosophical kind. Those who adhered to such notions or principles were recognized as forming a school, party or sect. The Jewish historian Josephus in the 1st century AD described the Pharisees, Sadducees, Essenes and Zealots, the chief religio-political parties of his day, as 'heresies'. The term is applied in no derogatory sense. It is similarly used of the Pharisees in the Acts of the Apostles. But it soon takes on an opprobrious meaning in the New Testament, as when St Paul puts heresy together with such vices as idolatry and sorcery (Galatians 5.20).

In Christian usage 'heresy' became a technical term for religious belief and practice deemed contrary to the established form of the faith. This meaning naturally implied that there was a right form of Christian doctrine or 'orthodoxy' (from Greek *orthos*, 'right', and *doxa*, 'opinion'). Deviation from this orthodoxy was regarded as a dangerous evil, to be condemned and rooted out. This attitude became a distinctive feature of Christianity. It played a decisive part in the development of faith; and was responsible for the infliction of terrible cruelties on those condemned as heretics.

The persecution of people for religious errors has, however, occurred in religions other than Christianity and it is necessary to look at some examples in order to appreciate what was peculiar in the Christian attitude to heresy. The earliest known example is the attempt of the Egyptian king Akhenaten (see IKHNATEN) to change the religion of his country. He has often been called 'the heretic Pharaoh', and the title is apt, if not strictly accurate. Theoretically, the Egyptian pharaoh was the sole representative of the Egyptian people before their gods. He was also the divine son of the sun god Re, the supreme deity of Egypt. Hence the king's religion was necessarily the religion of Egypt. But Akhenaten set out to change the established form of Egyptian religion for one of his own choosing, and took action to suppress the cult of the god Amun, the chief rival of the Aten, his own deity. There is, however, no evidence of his having persecuted the devotees of Amun. Akhenaten's case is unique: he was a heretic in relation to the religion of which he was the supreme representative. It was only after his death that the traditional religion asserted itself, and his memory was execrated.

Other religions provide sporadic instances of the persecution of heresy. It usually took the form of the defensive reaction of traditionalists against new ideas. The Greek philosopher Anaxagoras of Clazomenae (c 500–428 BC) was accused of impiety and driven from Athens for teaching that the sun was a red-hot mass and not a god, as Greek religion held. Political issues were, however, involved in his condemnation. Socrates was also condemned in Athens for impiety and introducing new 'daemonic things'; he ended his life in 399 BC. The death of Mani, the founder of Manicheism, in 277 AD resulted from charges made by the Magi that his teaching was contrary to Zoroastrianism, the established religion of Iran (see MANICHEANS). In 922 AD, in Baghdad, Mansur al-Hallaj the famous Sufi mystic, was crucified for having identified himself with God. In the eyes of orthodox Moslems, his teaching, which was based on deep mystical experience, was heretical.

Two Christian Gods?

Such examples of the persecution of heretics, though each is very notable, are really more significant for their rarity. They reveal, in contrast to Christianity, that in other religions there has been no deep concern about heresy. The reason for this undoubtedly has been that they have never been as concerned about orthodoxy.

The reasons for Christianity's attitude towards heresy are complicated, and are bound up with the origins of the faith. Largely as the result of the teaching of St Paul, the Jesus of Nazareth whom the Romans had executed in about 30 AD was regarded as a divine being sent into the world to save mankind. Such a belief inevitably involved a host of theological problems, the chief ones being the relationship of Jesus to God, and the nature of Jesus. If Jesus was divine, were there two gods; God and Jesus? Such a view was wholly unacceptable, and some solution had to be found that would explain how Jesus was divine. One solution seemed to lie in the description of Jesus as the 'Son of God'. But the relationship of son to father implies the prior existence of the father, and this meant that Jesus as the Son of God was not eternal. For there must have been a time when God existed alone, before the generation of his Son.

This question led to one of the greatest controversies in early Christianity. A theologian named Arius became the exponent of the view that Jesus, though divine, had been created by God. He was opposed by Athanasius, who defined orthodoxy as involving belief in Jesus as 'co-eternal' and 'co-equal' with God. The dispute became so serious among Christians that the Emperor Constantine called a general council of bishops at Nicaea in 325 to decide the issue. The teaching of Arius was condemned as heretical. Jesus was defined as being *homoousios*, a Greek word meaning 'of the same substance', with God. Arius and his chief supporters were sent into exile. This political penalty for heresy is significant. Under the Emperor Constantine Christianity had become the established religion of the Roman Empire, and this meant that heresy might now be punished by the state.

The condemnation of the Arian heresy had resulted from the desire to assert the full divinity of Jesus. The problem of the nature of Jesus arose out of the belief that he was both human and divine. Already by the 2nd century certain Christians, called Docetists, from the Greek *dokeo*, 'I seem', maintained that Jesus only 'seemed' to be a man. They explained that his physical body and sufferings were illusory. These Docetists were connected with Gnosticism, a widespread movement in the Graeco-Roman world, concerned with the duality of spirit and matter. Since Jesus was regarded as a divine spirit, he could not therefore have been really born as a human being. The 'orthodox' Christians rejected this view as heresy. They argued that Jesus, if he had not been a real man and suffered physically, could not have saved mankind.

In these early controversies about the nature of Jesus, the orthodox Christians could only condemn and dissociate themselves from those they regarded as heretics. After the time of Constantine I, they were able to impose legal penalties on their opponents in controversies about the same issue. As a result, Apollinaris, who taught that in Jesus the divine Logos, 'Word', took the place of the rational soul, was condemned at the Council of Constantinople in 381; and in 388 the Emperor Theodosius banned his followers 'from walled cities, from civilized society, from the communion of saints'. Nestorius, Bishop of Constantinople, was condemned as a heretic for rejecting the title of *Theotokos*, 'God-bearer', for the Virgin Mary. He maintained that Mary was the mother only of the human nature, and not of the divine nature of Jesus Christ. He was banished to Upper Egypt, where he died in about 451.

First Execution for Heresy

The Church's attitude to heresy had taken a more ominous turn in dealing with Priscillianism, an obscure movement that seems to have been related to Manicheism; it also denied the pre-existence of Christ before his birth from the Virgin Mary. Its leader, Priscillian, Bishop of Avila, was condemned by a synod of Catholic bishops at Bordeaux. He appealed to the Emperor Maximus, but was sentenced to death on a charge of magic and was executed in 386, together with some of his followers. This was the first instance of capital punishment for heresy. Although it drew forth a protest from St Martin of Tours, the execution set a grim precedent for future persecutors.

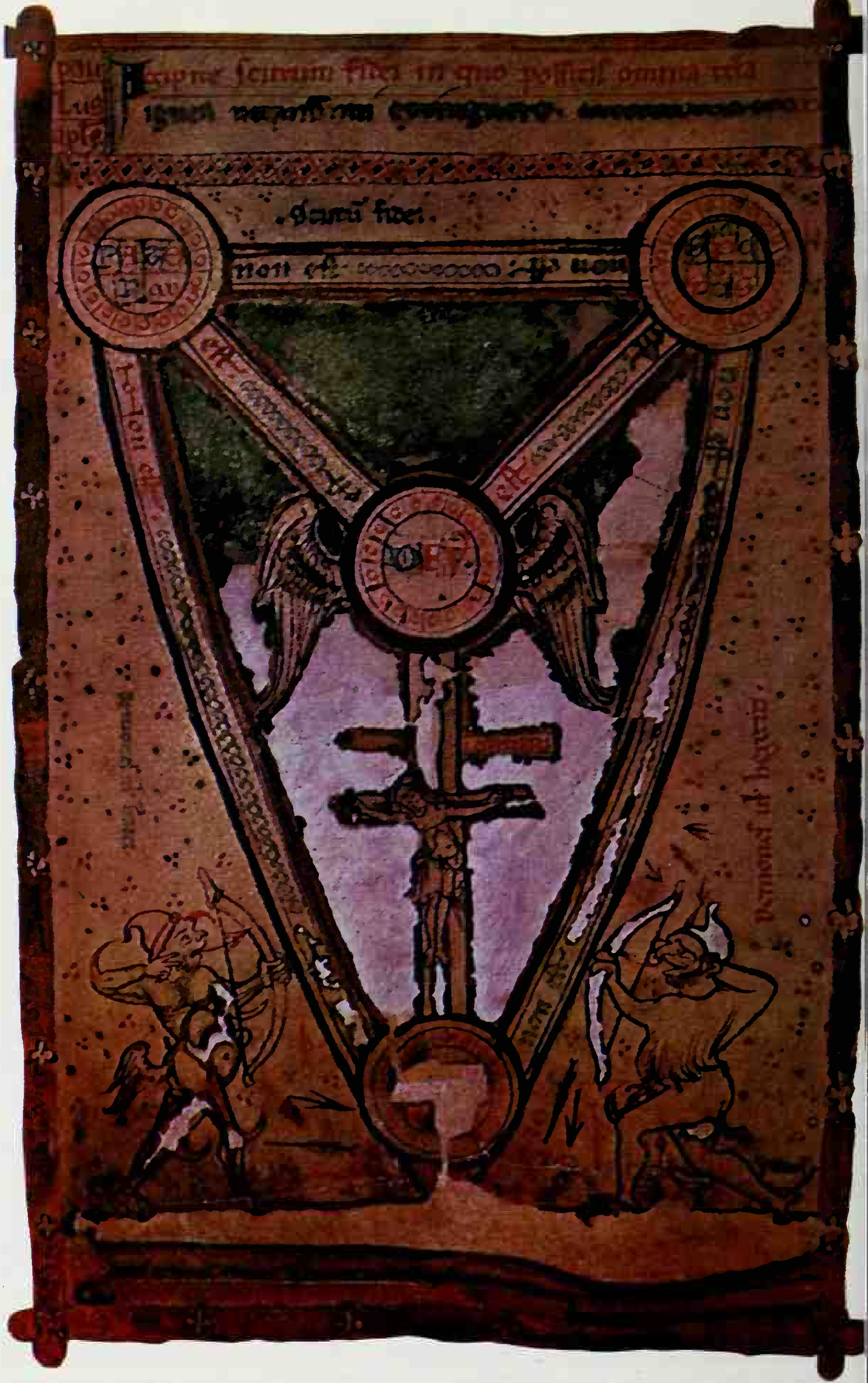
During the Middle Ages heresy took on a somewhat different form from that current in the past. The major doctrines of Christianity had now been defined and authoritatively established, and as a result no longer represented opinions about matters on which Christian belief had yet to be formulated. Instead, new movements appeared which virtually sought to set up a new form of religion. Often these movements were reactions against the corruption and formalism of established Catholicism, and particularly against ecclesiastical government.

The most notable heresy of this type was that of the Albigenses. The name was derived from the city of Albi in south-west France, which was the centre of the movement. The Albigensian heresy was related to that of the Cathars, 'the pure ones', which was found in other parts of Europe (see CATHARS). According to its teaching, which was based on Manichean dualism, there were two eternal principles of Good and Evil. The Good principle created spirits; the Evil principle created gross matter. Spirits were imprisoned in material bodies as a punishment and transmigrated from one body to another until they had expiated their original fault and merited heaven. The Albigenses taught that Christ was an angel, with a phantom body. He had become the Saviour by revealing the true (Albigensian) doctrine, which the Church had corrupted. The sacraments of the Church were rejected, together with its doctrines of hell, purgatory and the resurrection of the body. Albigenses lived according to a rigorous discipline: they condemned marriage, and even recommended suicide by starvation.

The Church regarded the movement as menacing both the Christian faith and ordered society. After unsuccessful attempts to convert its members by missions, in which St Dominic was involved, Pope Innocent III (1160–1216) launched a crusade against it. It was led by Simon de Montfort, and was conducted with great cruelty. Among the atrocities was the massacre of Béziers in 1209, in which 20,000 people were alleged to have died. The crusade ended in 1218. In 1233 Pope Gregory IX instituted the Inquisition to seek out and destroy the remnants of the heresy, a task that was entrusted chiefly to the Dominicans and Franciscans.

Pope Gregory's action followed quickly on that of the Emperor Frederick II, who in the previous year had commissioned state officials to hunt out heretics throughout his domains. The Pope doubtless deemed it unwise to allow laymen to become responsible for such a task. The papal Inquisitors travelled about a specific area, calling on those guilty of heresy to confess their sin. Voluntary confession involved a lighter penalty, such as fasting or making a pilgrimage. After a month's grace, the real work of the Inquisition began. Suspected persons were summoned by the parish priest concerned to appear before the papal Inquisitor, who was assisted by a select body of clergy and laity. Evidence for the prosecution was accepted on the testimony of at least two witnesses. The accused was permitted to have a counsel; but the duty of this officer was not to defend his client but to see that justice was done.

At first, when a confession could not be obtained from the accused after the production of evidence of his guilt, rigorous imprisonment under severe conditions was ordered. Since this course of action evidently did not secure the desired results, in 1252 Pope Innocent IV permitted the use of torture to obtain confessions.



Because of their opposition to the establishe Church, heretics were sometimes considered t be agents of the Devil: illustration from a 13t century manuscript, in which heretics are show as evil-looking demons shooting arrows at symbolized Trinity

Judgement was pronounced publicly at a ceremony known as the *Sermo Generalis*. After an exhortatory sermon, the sentences were solemnly read out. The penalties ranged, in graver cases, from confiscation of property, imprisonment either temporary or perpetual, to execution. The Church did not carry out the sentence of death; instead, the condemned heretic was handed over to the secular arm, and was usually burned at the stake. In Spain, the final ceremony was known as the *auto-da-fé*, meaning 'act of faith'. In this the accused was paraded in a special dress called *san-benito* which consisted of a yellow penitential garment, with a red cross on the front and back, and a yellow mitre. The garments of the unrepentant were embroidered with the forms of grotesque devils. According to the Bul *Ad Extirpanda* issued by Innocent IV i 1252, execution had to follow within fiv days of sentencing.

The Spanish Inquisition, which becam particularly notorious, had a distinctiv character, because of its close associatio with the state. It was originally establishe in 1479 by King Ferdinand V and Quee Isabella, with papal consent, to deal with special problem. Many Jews and Moors called Marranos and Moriscos, had been converted to Catholicism, usually under duress. The sincerity of their profession had, however, become suspect, and more stringent control was thought to be necessary. The first Grand Inquisitor, Tomas de Torquemada (1420–98), a Dominican friar, was especially zealous in rooting out heretics; he is credited with the burning of at least 2000 of them. The last execution at the stake took place in Seville in 1781. The Spanish Inquisition continued until its final abolition in 1820. Joseph Bonaparte suppressed it in 1808 during the French occupation of Spain, but it was re-established in 1814.

The Inquisition had been instituted originally to deal with heresy. But in 1320 Pope John XXII instructed the Inquisitors to deal also with witchcraft, if connected with heresy. This decision represented a departure from what had generally been the saner attitude taken by ecclesiastical authorities towards witchcraft in earlier centuries. The situation worsened in 1488, when Pope Innocent VIII strongly commended the publication of the *Malleus Maleficarum*, 'Hammer of Witches', written by two Dominican Inquisitors. It has been claimed that in about 150 years the Holy Office of the Inquisition was responsible for burning 30,000 witches. This savage mania against witchcraft was not peculiar to the Inquisition; it was also shared by Protestants, who killed thousands of alleged witches during the 16th and 17th centuries.

The persecution of heresy entered upon a new phase with the rise of reforming movements such as that of John Wycliffe in the 14th century. Wycliffe attacked both the papal government of the Church and certain medieval doctrines such as that of transubstantiation. Although he died peacefully, his followers, called Lollards, suffered much persecution. In 1401 the English Parliament passed the Act *De Haeretico Comburendo* to deal with the movement, and many Lollards paid the penalty for their heresy at the stake. John Huss, the Bohemian Reformer, who was influenced by the writings of Wycliffe, was excommunicated by Pope John XXIII and burnt at Constance in 1415.

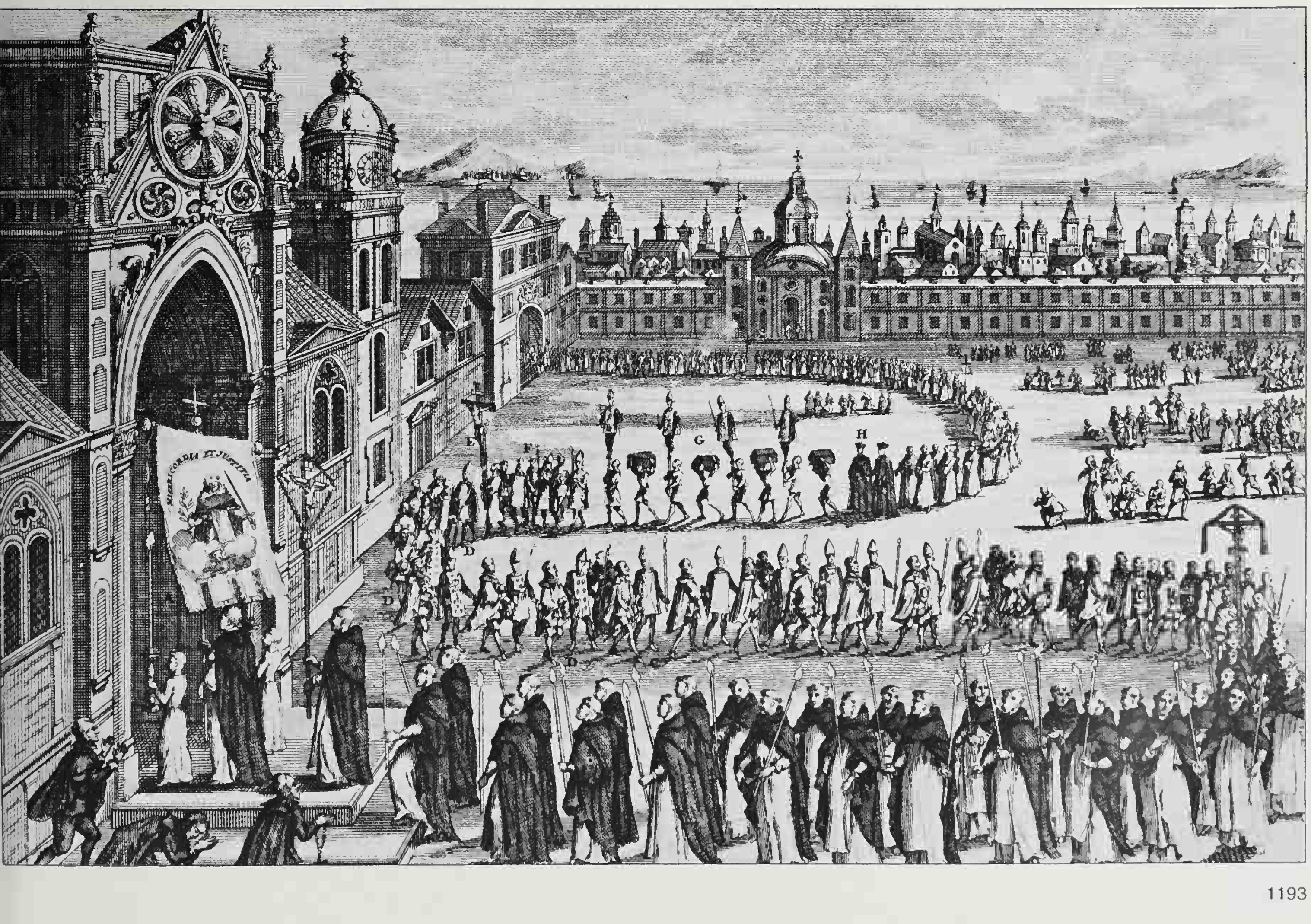
The Inquisition was used by the Catholic Church to stop the spread of the Reformation in most European countries and its cruelties left an indelible impression on the minds of Protestants. In 1542 Pope Paul III set up in Rome the Congregation of cardinals and officials commonly known as the Holy Office, as the final court of appeal in trials of heresy. In 1557 Paul IV caused the Congregation of the Inquisition to issue the first *Index Librorum Prohibitorum*, 'List of Prohibited Books', in an effort to warn the faithful against heretical writings. To keep this up to date, Pius V established in 1571 a special 'Congregation of the Index', to maintain and revise the list.

Persecution of what was considered to be heretical opinion was not confined to the Catholics but was also zealously undertaken by many Protestants. John Calvin was personally responsible for one of the most shocking instances: Michael Servetus, distinguished for his rejection of the dogma of the Trinity, escaped from the Inquisition to Geneva, Calvin's headquarters. But Calvin also regarded him as a dangerous heretic. Servetus was arrested and, on refusing to recant, was burnt at the stake on 27 October 1553.

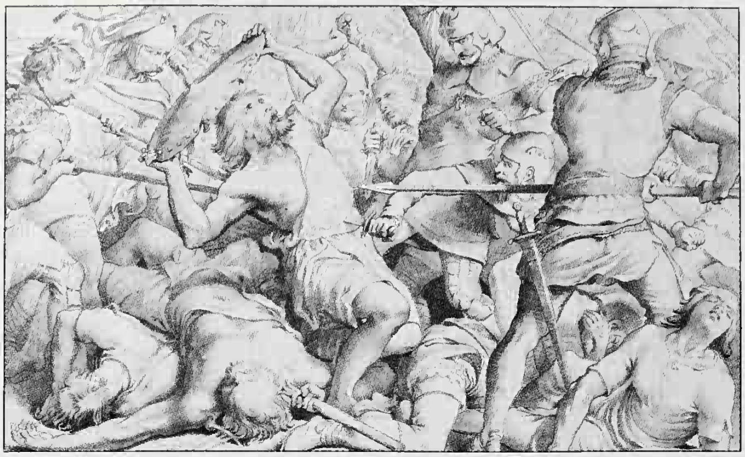
With the increasing secularization of society, toleration of diverse religious opinion steadily grew. But condemnations for heresy have occurred even in modern times in both the Roman Catholic and other Churches. Where clerics have been involved, deposition from office has usually followed: the help of the state can no longer be invoked in punishing heretical laymen. However, the Church still evaluates heresy as a most awful evil. In its Litany it prays: 'From all false doctrine, heresy and schism, Good Lord deliver us'.

S. G. F. BRANDON

FURTHER READING: H.O. Brown, *Heresies* (Doubleday, 1984); M. Lambert, *Medieval Heresy* (Holmes & Meier, 1977); E. Peters, ed., *Heresy and Authority in Medieval Europe* (University of Pennsylvania Press, 1980); S. Runciman, *The Medieval Manichee* (Cambridge University Press, 1955).



In the final ceremony of the Inquisition, known as the 'act of faith', heretics were paraded through the streets wearing special garments, before being handed over to the civil authorities to be executed; illustration from Picart's *Religious Ceremonies*, published in 1731, with the procession headed by Dominican Friars



Mansell Collection

Hereward the Wake

Anglo-Saxon outlaw and resistance leader against the Normans, who became the hero of popular legends; he and his followers helped the Danes to sack Peterborough Abbey in 1070; his stronghold on the Isle of Ely was besieged and taken by William the Conqueror; Hereward escaped but nothing more is known of him; there is no evidence that he was called 'the Wake' in his own day, and the name probably comes from his supposed connection with the Wake family from Bourne in Lincolnshire.

HERMAPHRODITE

THE NOTION of a bisexual divinity seems to have arrived comparatively late in the ancient Greek world: there is certainly no trace of it in Homer and Hesiod. Hermaphroditos, the god who was described by the Latin poet Ovid as 'neither man nor woman, who seemed to be neuter, yet bisexual', is mentioned for the first time by a later 4th century author, who says that superstitious folk put garlands on his statue on the seventh day after a child's birth.

According to Ovid (43 BC–18 AD), Hermaphroditos was the son of the love goddess Aphrodite and Hermes, the messenger of Zeus. To conceal his birth, Aphrodite entrusted him to the nymphs of Mt Ida, who brought him up in the forests. In his teens, though as beautiful as both his parents, he was a savage young man chiefly interested in hunting. One day in Caria, as he was bathing naked in a clear lake, the naiad Salmacis saw him and fell in love with him, shouted out, 'He's mine!', and flinging all her clothes off, plunged in after him. The bashful youth resisted her kisses in vain, and the gods granted her prayer never to be parted from him by uniting their two bodies in one.

It is obvious that the name Hermaphroditos gave rise to the myth, and not the other way round, though the local men used the story as an excuse for the loss of their virility, blaming the lake waters for their enervating effects, whereas, according to Strabo (64 BC–19 AD) their effeminate and self-indulgent habits were the cause.

It cannot be said that Hermaphroditos was the subject of any important cult, and the representations of bisexual gods and heroes in Greek painting and statuary, which are fairly common from the 4th century BC onwards, are due to a variety of inspirations, ranging from the individual artist's more or less idle fancy to half-understood notions derived from Cyprus, Persia and Asia Minor. The treatment varies from the depicting of a beautiful young man with a woman's breasts to, at a later period, an Aphrodite-like figure with male limbs. It has been pointed out by one authority on the subject that the more the feminine aspect is stressed, the more 'unnatural' the hermaphrodite appears.

The treatment of the hermaphrodite in Greek plastic art links up with a side of ancient life of which we get only occasional glimpses in the texts which have survived. A Sicilian Greek historian, contemporary with Julius Caesar, says that Hermaphroditos is a god who sometimes appears to men, and it may be assumed that this is an allusion to the observation of human hermaphrodites whose incidence must have been a cause of great fear among ancient peoples. If we turn from physical hermaphroditism to psychical bisexuality, there are scattered references to bisexual or 'unisex' customs in the ancient world. At Argos, for example, it was at one time the custom for a bride to put on a false beard (there was also a curious statue of a bearded Aphrodite in Cyprus in Aristophanes's time in the 5th century BC), and at Sparta the newly-wed girl put on man's clothing to go to the bridal bed. There are various stories of men and women exchanging clothes at certain religious festivals, but as all these customs are only briefly mentioned, at different periods of history and in different places, we have no means of assessing their social significance, if any, let alone of reconstructing the psychological experiences to which they possibly related.

Alongside these public manifestations of interest in the phenomena of bisexuality there were also speculations of a private or individual kind. In Plato's *Symposium*, a curious story to explain the origin of sexual love is put into the mouth of the comic playwright Aristophanes. Mankind is descended, says Aristophanes, from an earlier race of circular beings, some male, some female, and some hermaphrodite. The reason that there were three sexes was that the male came originally from the sun and the female from the earth, while the bisexual beings came from the moon, which shares the nature of both sun and earth. These circular beings had four arms and legs, four ears, two mouths and two sets of genitals. They became so uppish, however, that the gods decided literally to cut them down to size, which they did by bisecting them. Since that time, each one of us is constantly looking for his or her other half, which may be male or female, irrespective of our own sex. For in this scheme only those descended from the androgyne will be seeking a mate of the opposite sex.

When Hermaphroditos, the son of Aphrodite and Hermes, resisted the advances of the nymph Salmacis, she prayed that they should never be parted; the gods granted her wish by uniting their two bodies in one: statue in the British Museum

The link between the moon and bisexuality is found in a North American Indian legend where, of course, it cannot possibly have any connection with the ancient Greek or Egyptian myths. According to the Tsimshian Indians, the moon is a halfway house between heaven and earth, and is the domain of Pestilence, who is attended by four destructive, hermaphrodite dwarfs. There are a number of hermaphrodite myths in American Indian culture. The

Navaho tribe, for example, ascribed the invention of pottery and the wicker water-bottle to the hermaphrodite twins who were the first of five sets of twins born to the first man and the first woman.

One Pueblo Indian tribe, the unaggressive Zuni people, are reported to believe in a bisexual Creator, and hermaphrodite gods are connected with birth, self-perpetuation and rejuvenation in many places on earth, including ancient Egypt and pre-Columbian Central America. In American Indian mythology, the hermaphrodite may have originated with men who dressed as women and played an ambiguous role in tribal life, some of whom have been observed by missionaries and anthropologists, though it must be stressed that the connection, if any, between physical hermaphroditism and transvestism or other psychologically bisexual practices is obscure, and is only now being investigated scientifically.

It is possible that more fundamental notions underlie these myths. Analysing a myth of the Pawnee Indians of the North American Plains, in which a young boy is made pregnant as the result of a magic spell cast upon him by a malevolent medicine-man, Lévi-Strauss (in his *Structural Anthropology*) finds that confusion of sex in the boy is opposed to its irrevocable differentiation in the medicine-man. 'All of Pawnee metaphysical thought,' he adds, 'is actually based on the idea that at the creation of the world antagonistic elements were intermingled and that the first work of the gods consisted in sorting them out. The young child is asexual, or . . . the male and female principles co-exist in him.'

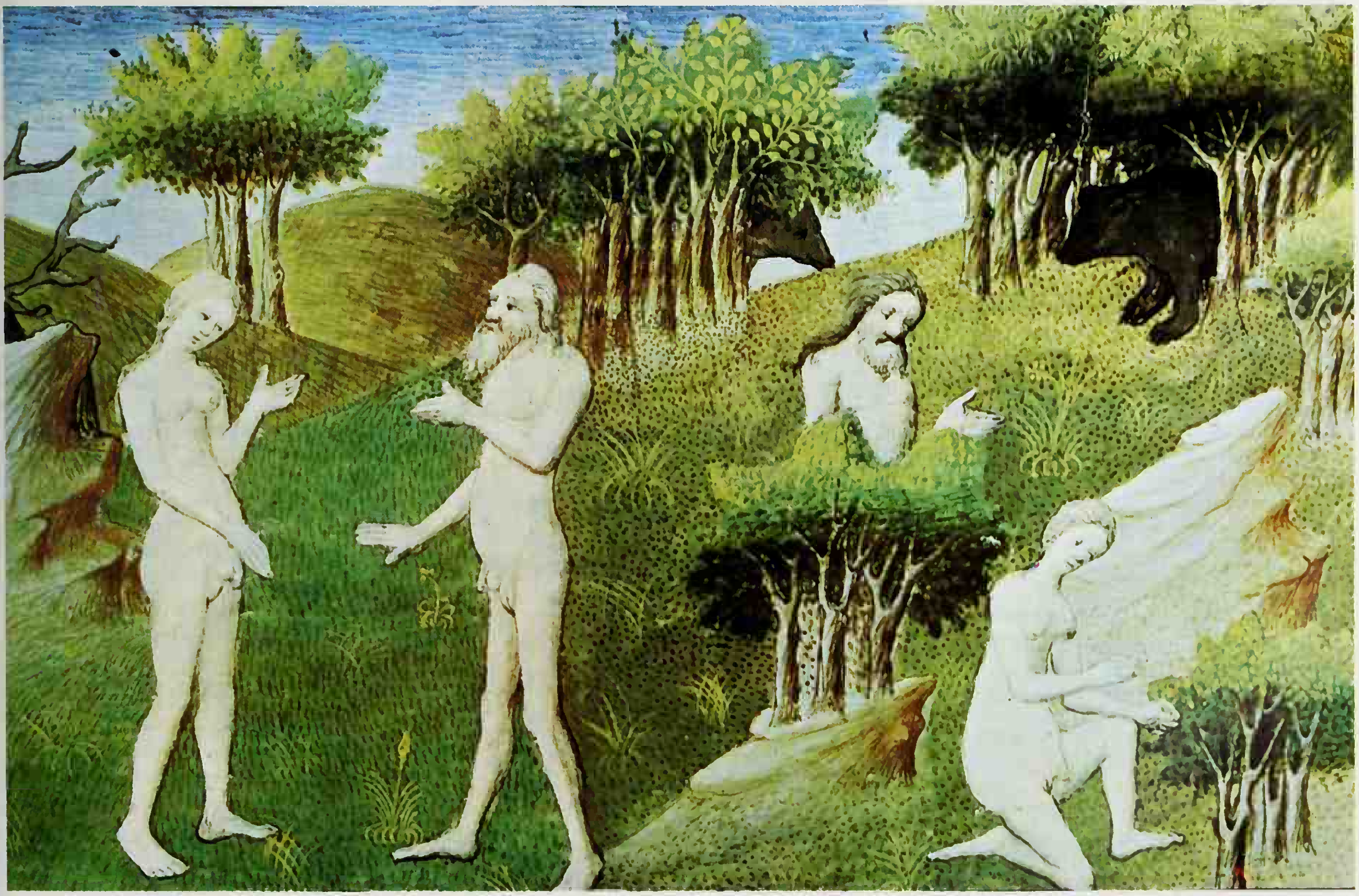
The idea of a bisexual deity occurs in ancient Indian religion, where the Hindu god Shiva is sometimes conceived as androgynous. Shiva is among other things a god of reproduction, and as such his cult is centred on the sacred *lingam*, a phallic emblem, which in temples and in the form of a small, portable object, is usually a round conical stone, rising perpendicularly from a stone platform, on which an oval rim is incised. The oval stone is the *yoni* or *bhaga* symbolizing the female genitals, so that this combination of *lingam* and *yoni* represents in some sense a bisexual principle. At the same time, the *yoni* symbolizes Shiva's wife, the goddess Parvati. It is not clear, however, how conscious the worshippers of these ancient Vedic gods are of the sexual connotations of these cult objects, which seem to be among the most time-honoured idols in India.

It has been asserted, for example by H. P. Blavatsky, that the concept of an androgynous god is universal in primitive religion, but if this is so, it is still doubtful to what extent we are confronted with a unified phenomenon. Moreover, in the few instances where some history of the hermaphrodite god can be traced, a number of ideas and experiences seem to have contributed to its invention. Human hermaphrodites (of which modern science distinguishes several distinct types, only the rare, extreme case having both male and female sexual glands) were regarded as ominous in ancient Babylon, as is known from an early text, and presumably elsewhere in the world. The impression they created on the primitive mind may have been the starting point of speculation about a bisexual divinity.

One notable point is that for the most part, Hermaphroditos, under whatever name he or she is known and worshipped, is a minor and peripheral deity. It remains to be seen whether there is any deep-lying connection between this deity and the bisexuality which some modern psychologists believe to be universal in human nature. At the turn of this century there was a great deal of interest in the subject in psychoanalytic circles, and Freud planned to write a book on the subject in collaboration with the Berlin physician Wilhelm Fliess (1858–1928), to whom Freud wrote in 1899: 'I am accustoming myself to the idea of regarding every sexual act as a process in which four persons are involved.' But a bitter dispute grew up between Freud and Fliess over precedence in the matter of having realized the significance of bisexuality, and though Freud was influenced by Fliess and by one or two other writers who developed the theme, it did not become the major theme in his work that it at one time promised to be.

DAVID PHILLIPS

The modern belief that bisexuality is a significant element in human nature is foreshadowed in this illustration depicting Adam and Eve, the first man and woman of the Old Testament, as hermaphrodites: from an early 15th century French manuscript



Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris

HERMES

IN MANY WAYS Hermes is the most sympathetic, the most baffling, the most confusing, the most complex and therefore the most Greek of all the Olympian gods. Like the Olympian goddesses, he had a prehistory; he is a very uneasy kind of Olympian, with deep popular roots.

There seems to be little doubt that Hermes signifies 'the god of the stone heap', the spirit immanent in stones set up as cairns or pillars to serve as boundaries, or as landmarks for the wayfarer. Truly a god of the countryside, he was associated with the Minoan pillar cult and there is evidence that the cult of Hermes existed in Crete in historical times.

Coins found at Cydonia and dated to about 250–267 BC, feature a nude Hermes with his wand and familiar broad-brimmed hat. It seems that at Cydonia Hermes could have had very special associations with the old Minoan population. According to the historian Ephorus (4th century BC) certain festivals were regularly celebrated for the serfs of this district, during which no free persons entered the city; the serfs were masters of everything and even had power to flog the freemen. It is tempting to connect this account with another old tradition that festivals of Hermes were celebrated in Crete, and that while the serfs were feasting their masters assisted in menial duties. On these occasions they would have been assuming temporarily the free status which their old Minoan ancestors had once enjoyed.

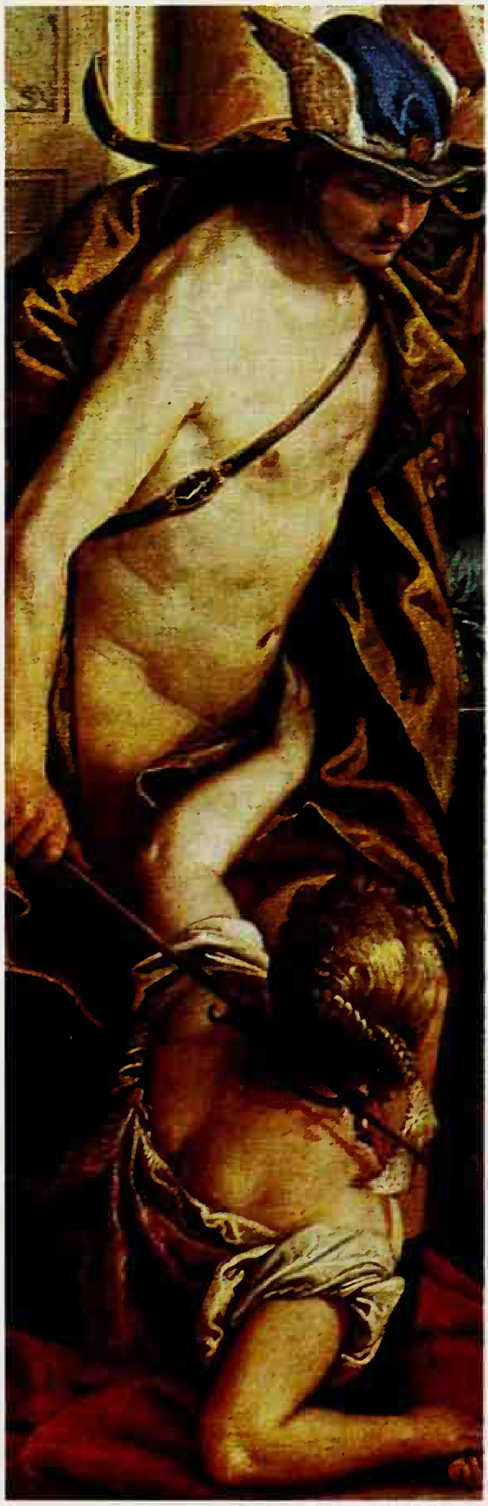
As W. K. C. Guthrie explains Hermes was named by the Greeks from *herma* or *hermaion*, a cairn or heap of stones. To explain this connection the Greeks characteristically invented a myth to account for it, that when Hermes killed the many-eyed monster Argus, he was brought to trial by the gods. They acquitted him and, in doing so, each threw his voting pebble at his feet and a heap of stones grew up around him. In fact Hermes must simply have been the daemon or spirit of the stone heaps themselves, about which there were several superstitious beliefs. Even now, in some parts of Britain, the wayfarer who wishes for good luck will add a stone to the cairn which he finds on the hilltop. This custom also prevailed in antiquity; and belief in the spirit of the cairn is still an occasional feature of northern European belief.

As the mythological explanation suggests, the *herma* consisted of an upright monumental stone with a heap of smaller stones around its base. Gradually the god, and the pillar which represented him, became more and more human in conception. He was given a phallus to promote fertility, and finally emerged as a fully human figure. Yet even in the 5th century the 'herma' which stood in front of Athenian houses had not thrown off all traces of their origin, and were no more than half-human in shape.

As Charles Seltman put the matter, it is now becoming apparent that, just as in Christian theology there are always two distinct influences, one Jewish and the other Greek, so in pagan theology there are two distinct influences, one pre-Hellenic, the other Hellenic, for all the most important Olympian deities. This is certainly true of Hermes, whose name is Greek but whose nature and functions are mainly derived from the beliefs of earlier peoples. He seems to emerge as a pastoral god and a guide to travellers because of his association, in remote antiquity, with cairns.

The later Greek-speaking peoples did not know the name that the pre-Hellenic inhabitants had given to the god of these stone heaps; and the name, as often in similar cases elsewhere, was doubtless withheld from them. Therefore they could only refer to him as 'Hermes' from their word for 'stone heap'. In the Laconian dialect which some of them spoke, he was known as 'Herman', 'He of the stone heap', or more familiarly, 'Old Heapy'.

The most versatile of all the Greek deities, one of the many roles of Hermes was that of messenger of the gods; Hermes with Herse, one of two sisters who had disobeyed the goddess Athene: painting by Paolo Veronese



The Syndics of Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge

It is true, as Seltman added, that recent research has provided a clearer perception of what the Greeks at different times thought and felt about Hermes, and more is known about him than about several other deities. The multiplicity of his titles and functions must not be allowed to disguise the fact that he is one of the earliest and most primitive of all the gods of Greece. In the prologue to the *Ion* of Euripides Hermes introduces himself in this way:

> Atlas, who wears on back of bronze the ancient
> Abode of gods in heaven, had a daughter
> Whose name was Maia, born of a goddess:
> She lay with Zeus and bore me, Hermes,
> Servant of the immortals.

This introduction modestly stresses his prehistoric origin and his subordinate status in the Olympian hierarchy. Further insight into the varied functions of this truly popular god is given in the *Plutus* of Aristophanes, and in the Homeric Hymn to Hermes, familiar to English readers in Shelley's translation, and one of the longest and most charming of all the Homeric Hymns. It tells the tale of the infant god's adventures following his birth in a cave on Mt Cyllene in Arcadia, the ancient seat of his worship. From there it was carried to other parts of Greece.

Hermes escaped from his cradle, went to Pieria and carried off some of Apollo's oxen, which he drove to Pylos, in the neighbourhood of Olympia. Returning to Cyllene, he found a tortoise at the entrance to his cave, placed strings across its shell and so invented the lyre on which he promptly played. Apollo discovered the theft, went to Cyllene and charged Hermes with the crime. Hermes's mother Maia showed the god the child in his cradle but Apollo took him to Zeus, who obliged him to restore the oxen. By giving him the lyre Hermes won the friendship of Apollo and also various prerogatives, including a share in divination, lordship over herds and animals, and the office of messenger from the gods to Hades.

As herald of the gods, Hermes was god of eloquence. Prudent and cunning, he was master of fraud, perjury and theft. He was also credited with a variety of inventions apart from the lyre. God of roads, he cared for travellers; and as inventor of sacrifices, he protected sacrificial animals, and was worshipped by shepherds. He was god of commercial transactions and good luck, and patron of gymnastics. The famous sculpture of Hermes by Praxiteles is one of numerous representations of this most versatile of all the Greek gods.

R. F. WILLETTS

FURTHER READING: W. K. C. Guthrie, *The Greeks and their Gods* (Methuen, 1950); C. Seltman, *The Twelve Olympians and their Guests* (Parrish, 1956).

Because man combines a godlike and a mortal nature, he is superior to the lesser gods who are only immortal, and to other creatures who are only mortal, and for the same reason he can create gods: these are among the ideas of the Hermetic texts of the early centuries AD

HERMETICA

THREE DIFFERENT intellectual movements met in the world of late antiquity. There was a style of philosophy which instead of busying itself with pedantic subtleties concentrated on those questions which move man to his depths, in the manner of Plato's great dialogues to which the Roman thinker Cicero and many of his contemporaries looked back. There was a new style of religious feeling, which searched for an intimate personal relationship with God. And, stimulated but not originated by the conquests of Alexander the Great, there was an intense interest in the old civilizations of Mesopotamia and Egypt, and in their 'ancient wisdom'.

One product of the mingling of these movements was a religious and philosophical literature which must have developed between the 1st century BC and the 2nd century AD. The works which make up this literature are called Hermetica because the principal character in them is usually Hermes Trismegistus. The name Trismegistus (thrice-greatest) shows that this is the Egyptian god Thoth (see EGYPT), who had been equated with the Greek Hermes by c 500 BC.

The Hermetic writings are in the form of dialogues in which, besides Hermes Trismegistus, the chief characters are Tat (Thoth again), the healing gods Asclepius and Imhotep, Ammon, Isis and Horus. Their purpose is to teach the understanding of God, man and the universe, and they announce their doctrines with the authority of the 'ancient wisdom' of Egypt. But they rarely make full use of the pretence that the speakers are Egyptian gods and demigods, and there is little genuine Egyptian tradition in the dialogues. The bulk of their teaching stems from Greek philosophy, especially from Plato and Aristotle. At times we have the impression that the writer has been satisfied with cursorily revising a Greek philosophical treatise or dialogue, with an air of solemnity and edification but quite often debasing or even mutilating the original thought. The Hermetic dialogues are not remarkable for consistency of thought or uniformity of terminology and the versions which have come down to us are crowded with obscurities and contradictions.

Quite a number of collections of Hermetic writings must once have existed. Some were gathered together at an unknown date in what is called the *Corpus Hermeticum*, which still exists. Another collection was made by John Stobaeus in the 5th century AD and most of it has been preserved. We know little of three others: one used by the Christian writer Lactantius c 300 AD; one quoted by the philosopher Iamblichus (early 4th century); and one of 15 books cited by the scholarly Christian theologian Cyril of Alexandria (early 5th century). Two other, longer texts stand alone. The first is the *Asclepius*, preserved in a Latin translation, possibly of the 3rd century AD. It is known and cited by St Augustine and is the text which defined the image of Hermetism in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance. The second is a dialogue between Isis and Horus, which has the strange title of *Kore Kosmou* (which might mean 'daughter of the world' or 'pupil of the world'). Stobaeus contains extracts from it.

Hermetism has frequently been compared to, and linked with Gnosticism and there are certainly many similarities. Gnosticism (see GNOSTICISM) flourished in the same period, is equally concerned with knowledge of God, the world and the soul, and equally teaches that the human soul can only escape from its bondage to matter if it possesses the true knowledge or understanding (the *gnosis*) which is the privilege of a select few. Large speculations about abstract cosmic powers are characteristic of Gnosticism and sometimes appear in the Hermetica too, and both were influenced by astrology.

But the extent of the connection should not be exaggerated. Much can be explained by common dependence on Platonism. Unlike the Hermetica, the gnostic texts were the sacred writings of communities of initiates and constituted a serious threat to the early Church. Hermetism and Gnosticism are related by the fact that they originate in the same period and spring from the same intellectual background but there is no closer connection.

Overleaf **Pictorial representation of the Hermetic philosophy of Nature: at the centre of the spheres of the seven traditional planets and the fixed stars is the Serpent of Wisdom twisted around the Tree of Life; the reference to the Philosopher's Stone points to the link between the hermetic tradition and alchemy: 15th-century illustration to the *Opera Chemica* by Raymond Lull, the 13th century Catalan mystic**

The first text of the *Corpus Hermeticum* is the most famous text in the collection, the *Poimandres*. The author tells us that he has been carried away in the spirit and met a superhuman being, Poimandres, the spirit of omnipotence. The author asks for understanding of the nature of things and knowledge of God. He is answered in a vision, in which he sees Darkness and Light. From Darkness comes moisture, and from it the other basic elements of which the world is made. Light is the Spirit (*Nous* or Mind) and from it comes reason (*Logos*). The original spirit gives birth to a second spirit, who is the demiurge, the creator of the world, which has two levels, the heavens and the earth.

The original spirit also gives birth to the original man, to whom is assigned the world of the stars. But earthly Nature falls in love with the original man, and as he looks down from above he sees himself reflected in the waters. He falls in love with his reflection, descends towards it and is embraced in the arms of Nature. This is clearly an interpretation of the Greek myth of Narcissus, who fell in love with his reflection in a pool.

Next, ordinary human man comes to life, with a mortal body, but he is also immortal because he contains part of the original man. As a mortal being he is subject to Fate but as an immortal being he is master of all things. At first all things were androgynous, combining both sexes, but then male and female were separated from each other, and the procession of the generations began. For man all that is important is to know 'who he is', that is, so far as he is the original man. Whoever knows himself reaches surpassing goodness but whoever remains enmeshed in love of the body stays in darkness and loses his immortality. The author is deeply moved by this pronouncement of Poimandres.

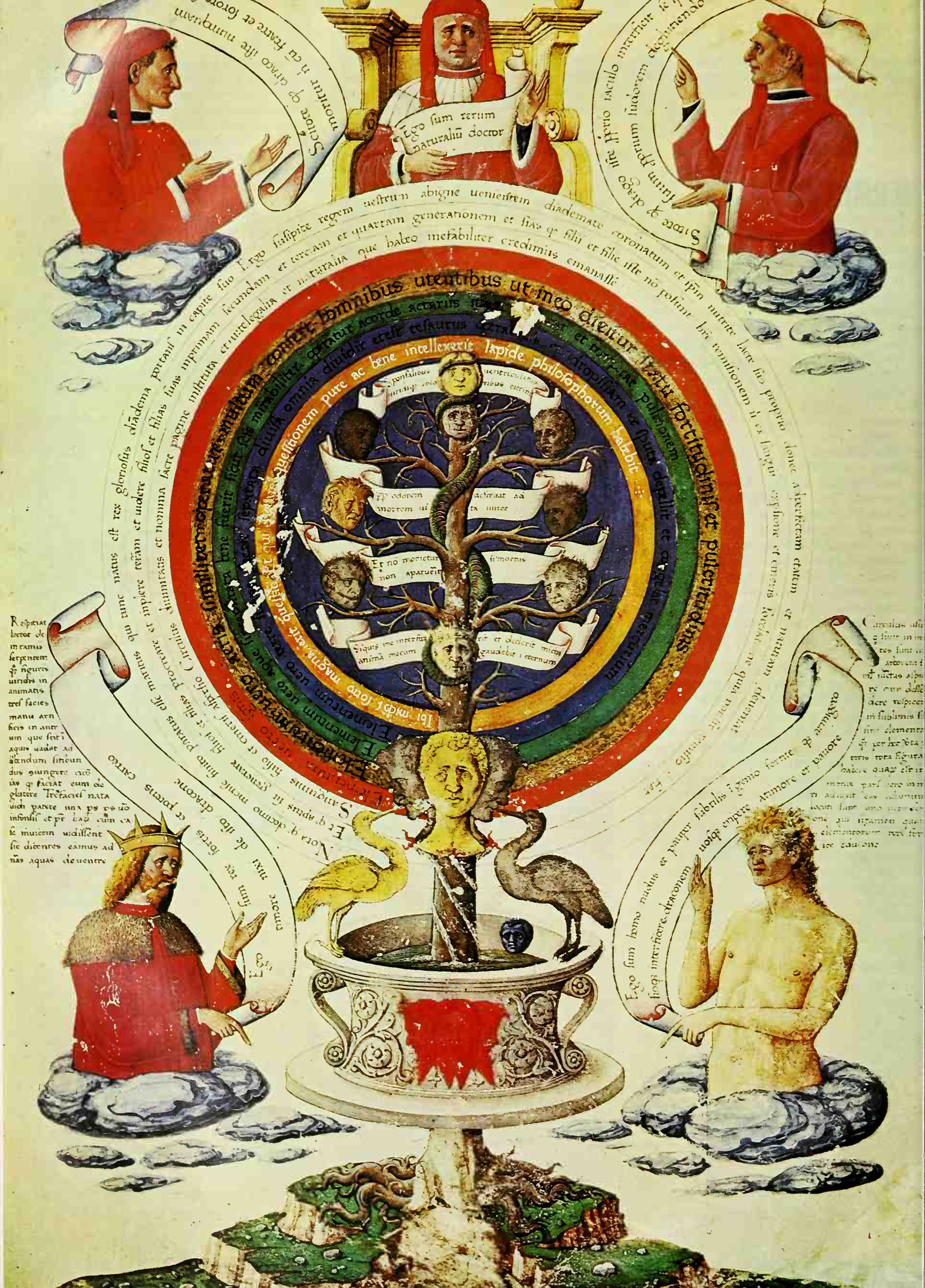
On Becoming God

For the Hermetists . . . it is through mystical experience that man attains liberation. In that experience, at its greatest intensity, the soul is wholly absorbed in the vision of God. 'Father,' says Tat to Hermes, 'you have given me my fill of this good and most beautiful sight, and my mind's eye is almost blinded by the splendour of the vision.' 'Nay,' Hermes rejoins, 'the vision of the Good is not a thing of fire, as are the sun's rays . . . It shines forth much or little according as he who gazes upon it is able to receive the inflow of the incorporeal radiance . . . He who has apprehended the beauty of the Good can apprehend nothing else; he who has seen it can see nothing else . . . He forgets all bodily sensations and all bodily movements, and is still. But the beauty of the Good bathes his mind in light, and takes all his soul up to itself, and draws it forth from the body, and transforms it wholly into the essence of God.'

In the ecstatic vision of the divine, man's being is deified; he passes into the divine Light.

In another tractate the writer suggests that it is possible to rise to the knowledge of God, which implies identification with Him, by the application of the principle that 'like is apprehended by like'. If thou canst not make thyself equal to God, thou canst not know God.' Such equalization to God can be attained by the illimitable extension of our being. 'Expand thyself into the immeasurable greatness, passing beyond all bodily limits; raise thyself above all time, become eternal. Then thou shalt know God.' A man is to transcend all spatial and temporal limits – to 'become higher than all height, lower than all depth', to take to himself 'the qualities of all creatures', to conceive himself to be in every place, in the living and the dead. By such an expansion of the range of his consciousness man may rise into oneness with God, who is Himself the Whole.

Sidney Spencer *Mysticism in World Religion*


Ego sum rerum naturaliū doctor
omnibus utentibus ut meo dicitur
fortitudinis et pulcritudinis
bene intellexerit lapide philosophorum habebit

At death, Poimandres explains, man abandons the body, the senses and the two lower parts of the soul, passion and desire. Then he ascends through the spheres of the seven planets, leaving behind him in each of them part of his being, the part which the original man had received from the stars. Finally he will be reduced to just himself and can enter the eighth sphere and join the powers assembled there. With them he comes before the Father and enters God. 'For this is goodness and the aim for all those who have intelligence: to become God.'

Poimandres disappears, telling the author to teach this knowledge to those who are worthy of receiving it. The author explains how he has tried to do this, and the text ends with solemn praise of God.

The story seems strange and fantastic but on careful examination almost all its ideas can be traced back to Plato and his followers, to Aristotle, and to the Stoic philosophers. The same thing is true of the other texts in the *Corpus Hermeticum*.

The extremely influential *Asclepius* is a discussion between Hermes, Asclepius, Tat and Ammon. It begins with an incoherent exposition of the belief that 'all is one' and of the hierarchy that leads from God down to animal and plant life. Then follows an impressive consideration of the position of man in the universe and his task in life. The task is a double one, to show piety towards God and, by order of God and together with him, to rule the earthly world. The main virtues of men are piety and a contempt for the body and matter. Whoever co-operates with God merits release from his mission in the world and a return to the godlike life of the pure spirit. Those who fail to do this are reborn after death in other forms. False philosophy is attacked, the study of mathematics, musical theory and geometry, for the only use of these sciences is to induce admiration of the splendour of the ordered universe. All else is 'sophisticated subtlety'.

The work goes on to discuss God, matter and the evil which is part of the universe. God has given men spirit, knowledge and reason to fight evil. A hierarchy of gods is introduced. The first god is androgynous, without limit and incessantly begetting, because he is good and passes on his goodness. All other beings have their procreative power from him. Man has reason and knowledge, and because he combines a godlike and a mortal nature, he is superior to the gods who are only immortal, and to the other creatures who are only mortal. That is why he is capable of creating gods – the gods who live in the temples and enjoy the worship of the people. In the statues of these gods live divine souls, put there by men, which prophesy the future and send the people both diseases and cures.

Unexpectedly, we next come to praise of Egypt and a vision of its future. One day the gods will leave Egypt, religion will perish, barbarians will rule and the people will be ruined by cruelty and godlessness. But God will intervene and destroy all evil-doing with fire or flood or pestilence and restore the old glory of the world. The lower gods will return and assemble in a town in Egypt to which all mortals will gather. Asclepius asks where these gods are at present, and is told, 'They are in a very big town on the Libyan mountain. But now enough.'

The Creation of Gods

Eventually, after telling us that physical death is followed by the judging of the soul, with the punishment of offenders, the *Asclepius* returns to the subject of man's ability to create gods. 'Our ancestors discovered the art of creating gods.' They made statues, 'and because they could not create souls, they conjured the souls of demons or messengers (angels) and introduced them by holy and godly mysteries into the images of the gods, so that they received the power to cause good and evil.' The first Asclepius and the first Hermes were among the gods created in this way, and they are the ancestors of the speakers in the dialogue. Isis was also made in this way. These gods are approached through sacrifices, hymns and praises.

This is a strange theory of the images of the gods. Educated Greeks and Romans knew, of course, that the man-made statue of a god merely represented the presence of a god in his temple. But the beliefs of the less educated were probably never so clear-cut. It is typical of the period that ideas previously ignored as superstitious by the sophisticated now come to the surface and are formulated in literature, and it is doubtful that the idea of man installing demonic or angelic beings in the statues originated with the Hermetic authors. Certainly the theory was not confined to them.

The *Asclepius* ends with the statement that enough nourishment has now been given to the souls of the listeners and it is time for the body to have its share. A final prayer is said, requesting God to 'preserve us in the love of your knowledge so that we shall never be separated from this form of life', and the speakers sit down to a vegetarian meal.

Originality is not a virtue of the Hermetica. They contain scarcely a paragraph which cannot be considered as a development or continuation of older and more original ideas. Almost all the material is drawn from Greek philosophy, with a little from ancient Egyptian beliefs and Mesopotamian astrology, and still less from the Old Testament. But the spiritual atmosphere is distinctly impressive. God, the world and man are the topics that continually recur. The spirit is godly and good, matter and the body are evil. Man must live in conformity with the spirit, which means that he must try to know God and to share with God the task of administering the world of matter. Understanding and piety are the only important things.

The negative aspect of this is that the Hermetica do not offer us theological argument, still less any treatment of natural science or natural philosophy. Even though they discuss the creation and ordering of our world, scientific astronomy, meteorology or biology are matters of complete indifference to the Hermetic authors. Nor do they offer any guidance in practical ethics. Only to a small extent is this due to their device of setting the dialogues in a time long before, when the concrete ethical problems of life in the Hellenistic centuries could not yet exist. It is due far more to the fact that for the Hermetic authors there is really only one virtue: the piety that shows itself in longing to know, to understand, God, the world and man.

OLOF GIGON

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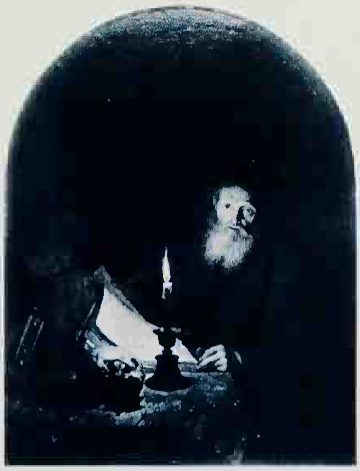
Hermit

Or eremite, a person who lives in solitude, retreating from the bustle of the world and human company to concentrate on religious devotion; from the Greek word for 'desert', because the first Christian recluses were those, like St Anthony, who lived alone in deserts; hermits were common and much respected in medieval times: with the craze for Gothic medievalism in the 18th century it was briefly fashionable to pay a 'hermit' to live picturesquely in a grotto on the grounds of a country house.

See ANTHONY; SELF-DENIAL.



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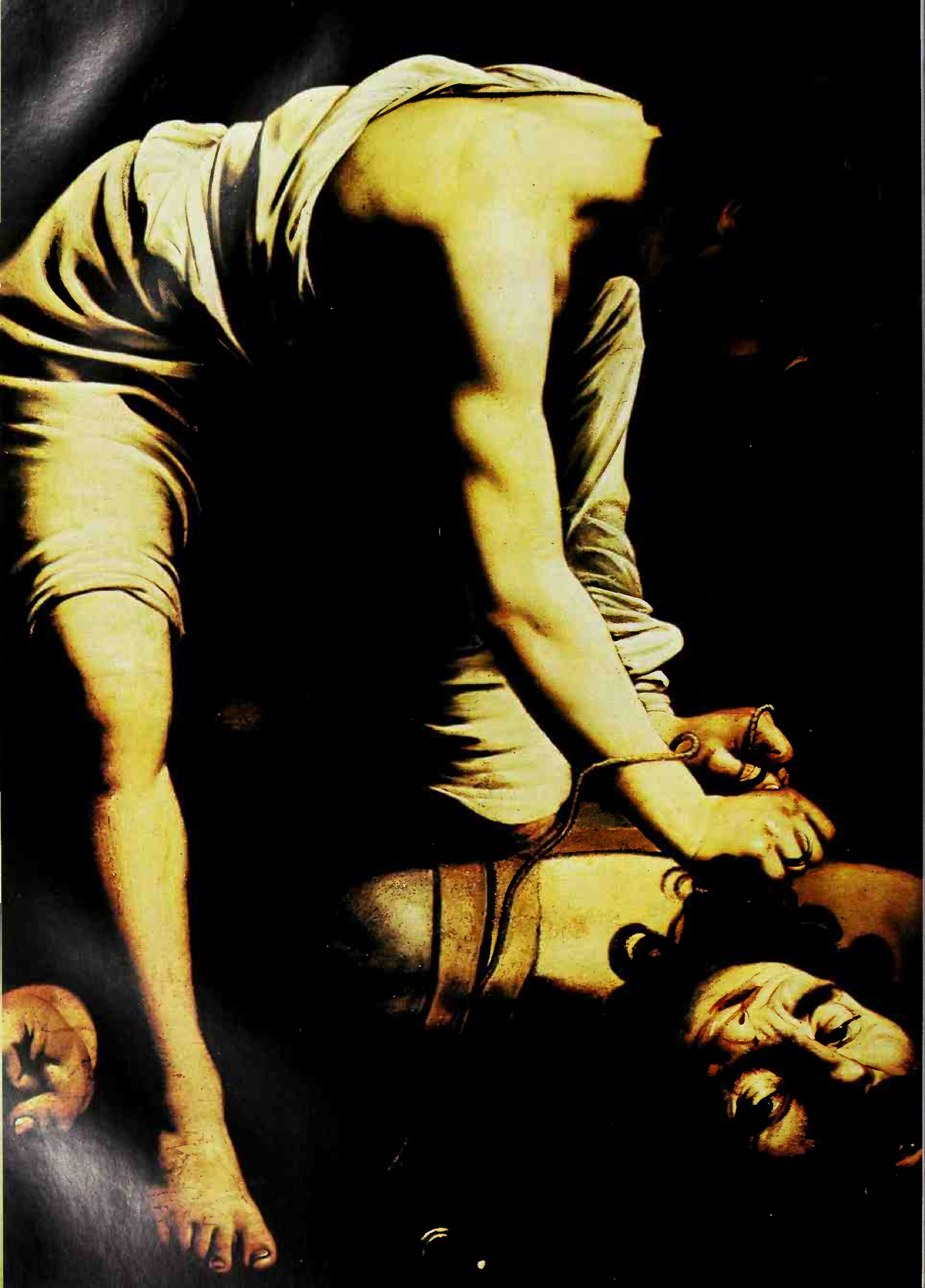


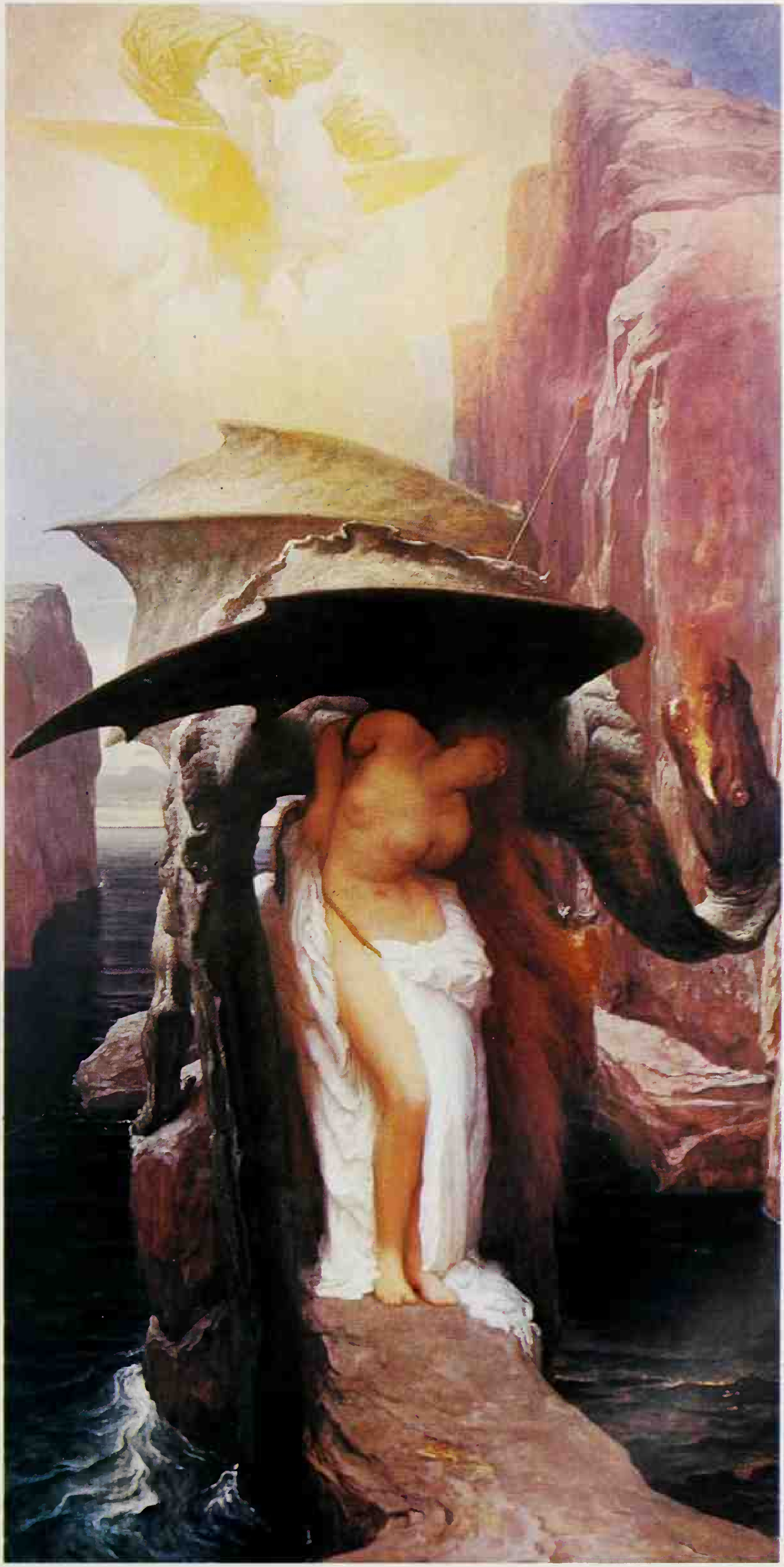
HERO

The hero in his quest for some priceless treasure blazes a trail for the less adventurous to follow; his end is often untimely but above all it is for the way in which they die that the great heroes of literature are remembered

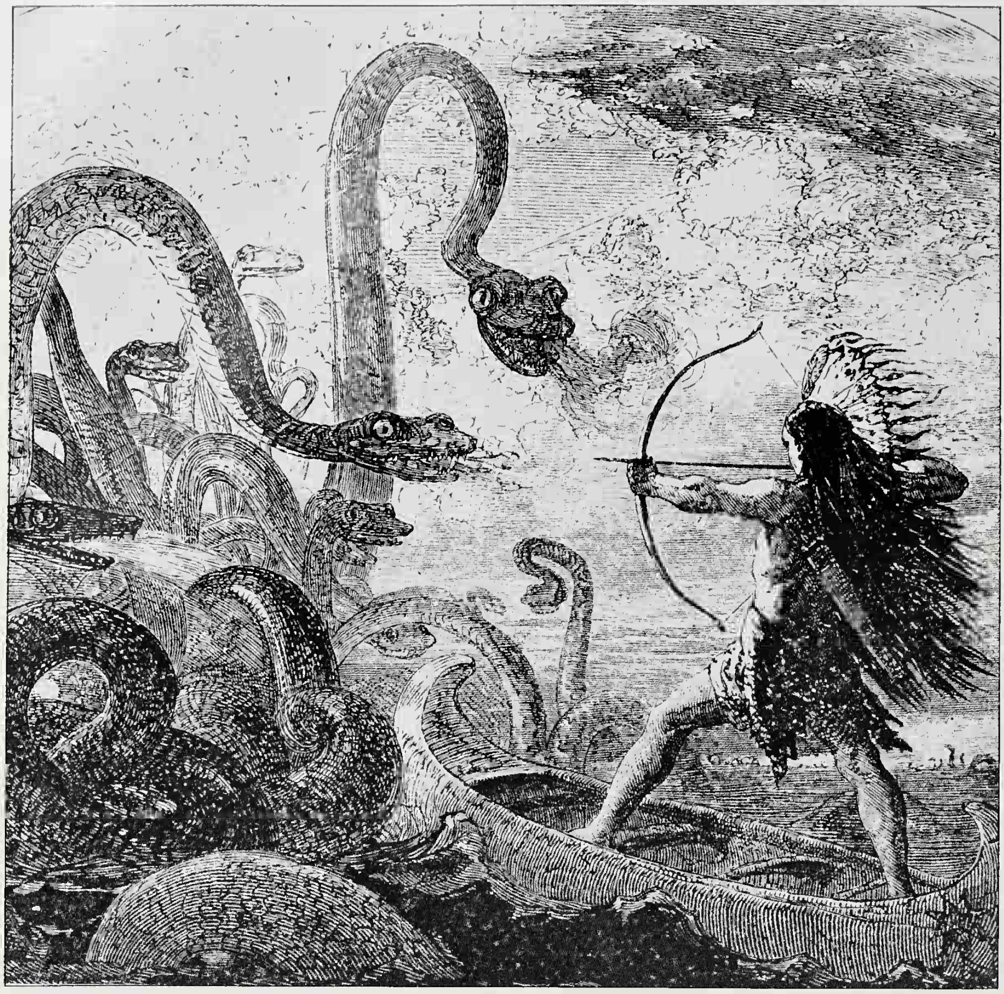
USED IN EVERYDAY speech to mean an outstandingly brave man, or to designate the main character in a literary work, the word hero’ may also be used in a specialized sense, to refer to figures in so-called ‘heroic’ literature. Such literature has flourished in many lands in many periods of history, whenever tales and songs are composed about a race of men whose strength and courage are above the ordinary, who accomplish great deeds, have dealings with supernatural beings, and may themselves be of supernatural parentage.

The heroes may occasionally become objects of local cults, with shrines erected to their memory and games held in their honour. Such cults existed among the Greeks, in particular the cult of Hercules, the semi-divine hero of enormous strength who accomplished a series of celebrated deeds, and saved the Greeks from many dangers.

In some cases the traditions of the heroes of the past have produced great epic poetry, as with the Homeric heroes whose exploits are the subjects of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, and the Germanic heroes, who inspired such works as *Beowulf* and the *Nibelungenlied*. Elsewhere there are songs, stories, ballads and more sophisticated written literature which has developed out of the early heroic tales told by people who themselves could neither read nor write. Interest in heroic literature has developed greatly during the present century, since travellers and scholars have collected much material from native poets and reciters who composed their work


John Mills

Left **David, who fought and conquered the giant Goliath, is one of the heroic Jewish leaders whose exploits are recounted in the Old Testament: *David and Goliath* by Caravaggio, in the Prado Museum, Madrid *Right* Greek tradition is rich in heroes; Perseus, who rescued Andromeda from a dragon, is typical of this race of men who accomplished great deeds, often with supernatural aid: *Perseus and Andromeda*, painting by Lord Leighton, in the Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool**



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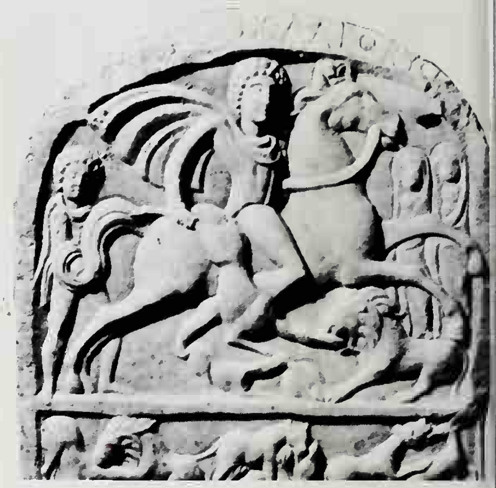
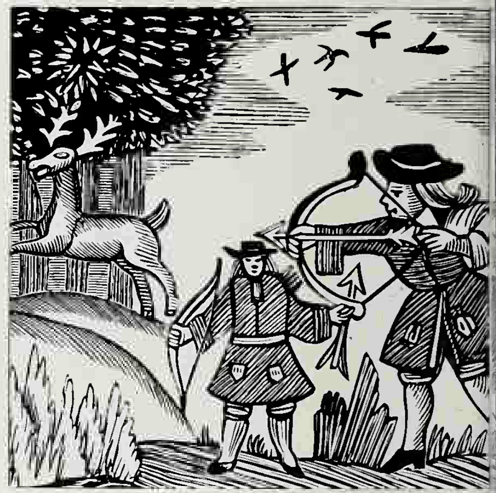




orally and never attempted to write it down. Many heroes' legends survive, although others have been lost. The heroic poetry of Gaul for instance, has disappeared without trace, while the Roman orator Cicero (1st century BC) lamented the disappearance of old poems about ancient Roman heroes such as Romulus and Remus, who are remembered only briefly in summaries of their deeds by later writers. Fragments of the ancient *Epic of Gilgamesh*, thought to date from the 3rd millennium BC, show that the central figure was a hero who defied the goddess Ishtar and went on a hazardous journey to the world's end to search for his comrade Enkidu, who had gone down into the land of death to find some escape from the mortality to which man is doomed (see GILGAMESH). Already the hero's adventures may be seen as a spiritual quest.

The epic poems ascribed to Homer, the finest example of epic poetry known to us, go back to the 8th century BC. The heroes of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* are of magnificent stature, they live in small independent kingdoms in the Eastern Mediterranean and win lasting glory by their courage and mighty deeds. The gods support and oppose them in a very human way, and converse familiarly with one another in the background, while the realities of everyday life are convincingly portrayed. Yet there is a sense of boundless possibilities opening out for the human spirit, even far beyond the limits of the ordinary world.

There were many other Greek heroes, such as Prometheus, the Titan imprisoned by Zeus for giving fire to mankind; Theseus who slew the Minotaur, and Jason who sailed to find the Golden Fleece. These remain famous even though their stories survive only in fragments. For many of these heroes, what matters most is their journey or quest. Scenes from their adventures may be seen on Greek vases and exemplify heroic literature at its best.

Another heroic work of epic size is the *Mahabharata* of India, which contains many heroic myths, although these have been heavily edited by the Brahmins. The Jews too had their own heroic age, when fighting to establish themselves in Palestine. The Old Testament has some fine heroic leaders such as Gideon and Samson, while the story of David is a superb saga with a serious inner core.

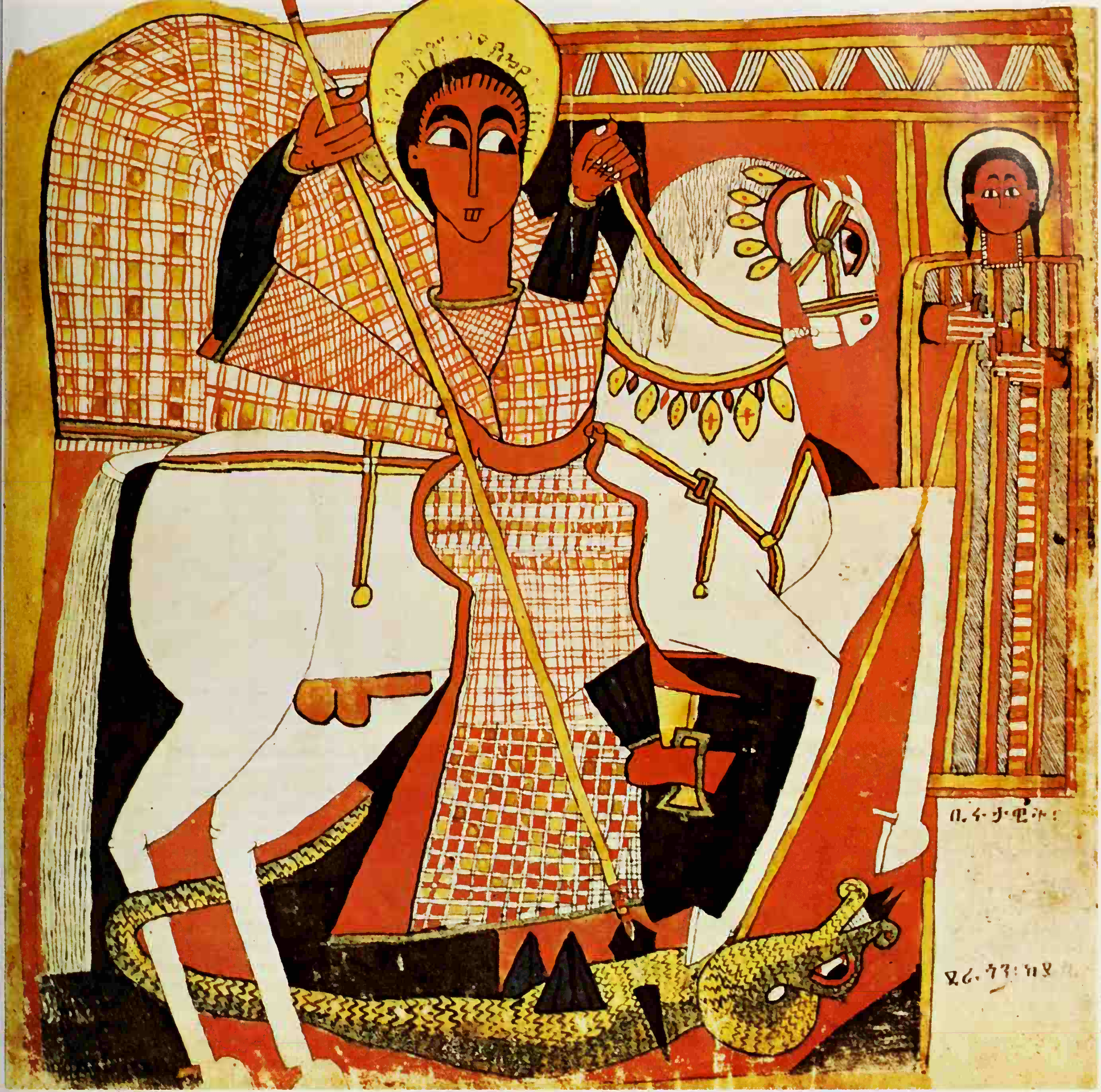
There is a wealth of heroic poems from western Europe dating from early medieval times. From Britain comes the Anglo-Saxon epic *Beowulf*, the hero who battled against monsters, established himself as a great king and died defending his people from a dragon. All this is set against a background of feuds and wars of great interest to the scholar. The epic has claims to greatness in its own right as fine poetry. The theme of man's struggle against evil and the threat of mortality links it with other heroic works; again, the pattern is that of the quest of the hero, his fight against great odds, and his tragic end (see BEOWULF).

Other heroic poems from the Anglo-Saxon period exist only in fragments, but there were many traditions known to the Anglo-Saxons and to the kindred Germanic nations of north-western Europe. The Vikings continued the heroic tradition.

One great Viking hero was Sigurd the Volsung, who is commemorated on carved stones all across the British Isles and Scandinavia. He slew a dragon and won the gift of secret knowledge and a mighty treasure, but the gold brought a curse with it, and he was slain by his brothers-in-law in the course of a feud. Sigurd was the son of another mighty hero, Sigmund, and the tragic history of this family, many of whom went courageously to their deaths fighting against overwhelming odds, is a stirring one even in the late form in which it has reached us: the *Saga of the Volsungs* and a number of poems in Old Icelandic.

These tales emphasize the importance of women in heroic tradition. Sigmund's sister Signy dared and suffered much to avenge her father and brothers, whom her husband had treacherously killed. Sigmund's ill-fated wife and the proud Valkyrie Brynhild inspired the finest poems in the Icelandic collection. Brynhild slew herself at Sigurd's funeral, while Gudrun lived on to see tragedy repeated among other members of her family. The story of the Volsungs also inspired the Middle High German epic, the *Nibelungenlied*, in which Sigurd and Gudrun appear as Siegfried and Kriemhild, and which later won new fame in the operas of Wagner (see NIBELUNGLIED).

Celtic Britain also had its heroes. Early Welsh medieval poems have many references to King Arthur (see ARTHUR), whom



Michael Holford/British Museum

many scholars consider to have been a Romano-British warrior. Around King Arthur and his knights a rich body of poems and stories developed in medieval Brittany, France and England, in which his followers rode on strange quests and met supernatural adversaries. The most haunting and mysterious tales concerned the Grail, in which mystical Christianity is mingled with pagan Celtic mythology (see GRAIL).

The heroes of Ireland, such as Cu Chulainn and Finn (see CUCHULAINN; FINN), are remembered in stories in early Irish, which contain elements from pre-Christian times. In these Irish sagas and in the Welsh *Mabinogion* (see MABINOGION) the fantastic and the marvellous predominate, unlike the Homeric and Nordic legends. Other celebrated heroes were the knights of the Emperor Charlemagne. A short French epic, the *Chanson de Roland* of the 11th century, relates the fight of one of Charlemagne's heroes against the Saracens. In the next century a group of Spanish poems, the most famous of which is the *Poema de mio Cid*, deal with the heroes of Castile.

From eastern Europe a group of narrative poems in Russian, the *byliny*, deals with the early heroes of Kiev and Novgorod and the later Cossacks. But heroic poetry is not confined to ancient or medieval times. The Touareg of the Sahara and the Zulus of South Africa have a vast repertory of legends. The American Indians also have many stories about heroes, some of whom were also shamans or magicians, with

Although some heroes are purely mythological figures, others are based on historical characters *Far left* Hiawatha defeats the Kenabeek, a many-headed monster; according to Iroquois tradition, he was a prophet who lived in the 16th century *Centre* The Hero God of Thrace (*above*); the exact nature of his cult is not known but more than 10000 memorials can still be seen in the Balkans. Robin Hood (*below*), who robbed the rich to help the poor,was commemorated in countless ballads *Above* St George, traditionally the patron saint of England, probably lived in Palestine and the Lebanon about the 3rd century AD; his legendary battle with the dragon is an allegorical expression of the Christian hero's triumph over evil; illustration from a 17th century Ethiopian manuscript adventures in the supernatural world. The Polynesian peoples of the Pacific boast a rich store of mythical stories about intertribal warfare, voyages of discovery in the Ocean, and heroes who visit the underworld as well as fighting many enemies.

There are modern heroes too, whose exploits form the bases of new heroic myths. Often these heroes may be fighting for national freedom against an overwhelming oppressor. The struggles of Balkan peoples in the 19th century against the Turks gave rise to a fresh crop of heroic poetry. Similarly the 1917 Revolution in Russia inspired a number of poems in which Lenin was presented as a hero in the old tradition. Davy Crockett is another typical hero from the Wild West. Perhaps the most striking modern heroes are not celebrated in verse but in song or on film. Che Guevara, the Cuban revolutionary, became a hero in the 1960s to a whole generation of young people. In a very different way some rock or film stars have acquired a legendary or heroic aura, linked with early death, which has rendered their names immortal. This immortality is the essence of heroism.

Brief Life and Lasting Glory

The end of heroes is often tragic and untimely; Achilles dies in battle, choosing a brief life and lasting glory rather than a safe long life devoid of heroic feats; Samson pulls the pillars of his enemies' hall down upon himself and dies with the multitude whom he destroys; Ragnar Lodbrok dies in a snakepit laughing. It is for their deaths above all that heroes are remembered. These in themselves are normally so memorable – because they are so dramatic and noble, or at least unusual – that the tales remain moving and effective even when retold in a style and language far removed from that of the original tradition.

H.R. ELLIS DAVIDSON

FURTHER READING: D. Brinton, *American Hero Myths* (Johnson Reprint); J. Campbell, *The Hero With a Thousand Faces* (Princeton University Press; 1968, 2nd Edition).

HEXAGRAM

A SIX-POINTED star made of two triangles superimposed on each other is one of the signs used in European magic to master spirits and keep evil influences at bay. The hexagram's twin triangles, one pointing up and the other down, can be taken to embody the esoteric maxim 'as above, so below' and interpreted as a symbol of God and man, of the magical power of man as the potential macrocosm and master of all things (see MACROCOSM). It was on the sixth day of creation, according to Genesis, that God made man 'in his image'.

The hexagram is also credited with occult power because it combines male (the upward-pointing triangle) with female (the one pointing down), or spirit with matter. The two triangles are also the symbols for fire and water, and in alchemy the hexagram may stand for the Philosophers' Stone, which some alchemical writers said was made of fire and water. Six in numerology is the number of balance and harmony, as the design of the hexagram figure itself suggests, and in the Cabala the sixth sefirah, Tifereth, is the central, balancing and harmonizing sphere of the Tree of Life (see CABALA; NUMEROLOGY).

The symbol is much better known, however, in its Jewish role as the Magen David (in Hebrew) or 'Shield of David', often called the Star of David. In Nazi Germany and Nazi-occupied Europe during the Second World War, Jews were required to wear a yellow Magen David as a distinguishing badge sewn onto their coats, sometimes with the German word *Jude* (Jew) on it.

The hexagram as an emblem of Jewish identity, however, is a comparatively recent phenomenon, though the six-pointed star has been found in a few early Jewish synagogues and graves. In the Middle Ages it appears more often in Christian and Moslem contexts, but with a Jewish connection, for it was often called the Seal of Solomon. It was also employed on Jewish amulets intended to attract good luck and ward off bad, often with names of God or biblical texts inscribed in it.

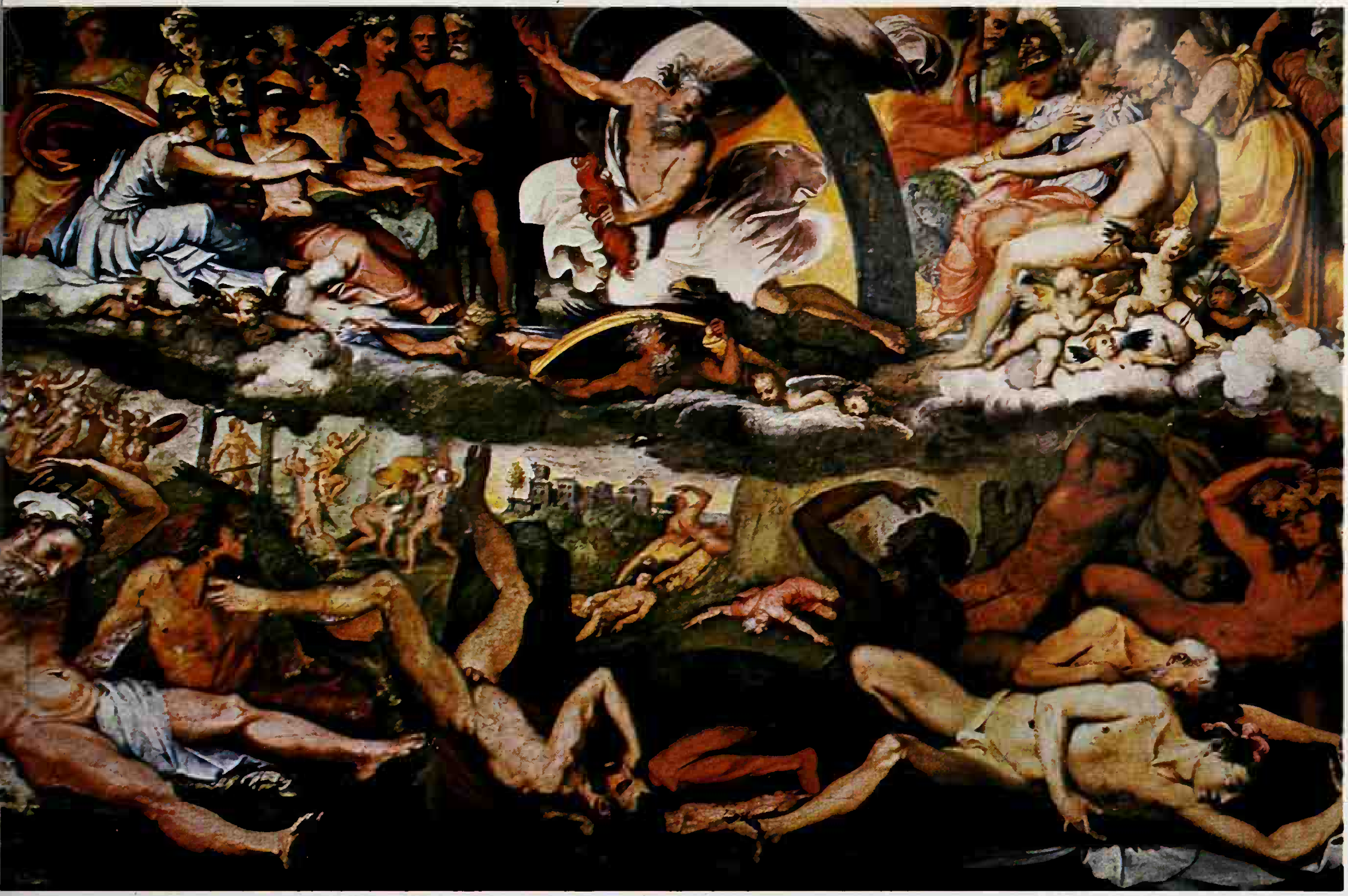
The hexagram was sometimes drawn on the *mezuzah*, the talisman which was traditionally placed on the doorpost of a Jewish house to keep evil out, and the name Shield of David gradually took the place of the earlier Seal of Solomon.

In 1354 the Jews in Prague were given the right to a flag bearing a hexagram, as a privilege, and this banner later became known as 'King David's flag'. In the 17th century the symbol was inscribed on a stone in Vienna marking the boundary of the Jewish quarter of the city, and some Jewish cabalists used it as a symbol of the Messiah. It was not until the late 18th century and the 19th century, however, that the Shield of David began to be adopted at all widely by European Jewry, in western Europe at first and in response to a growing demand for a symbol of Judaism parallel to the Christian cross and the Moslem crescent. The Austrian branch of the Rothschild family used the hexagram on their coat of arms when ennobled by the Emperor in 1822 and in 1897 it was adopted as a symbol by the First Zionist Congress. It was the emblem on the Palestinian Zionist flag in the 1930s and 1940s, and today it appears proudly on the national flag of the state of Israel.

The term is also applied to the symbols used in the ancient Chinese book of divination called the *I Ching*. They bear no relation to the Hebrew hexagram, however, being composed of six horizontal lines, each of which may be continuous or broken (see I CHING).

Camera Press London

Star of David above the doorway of a house in Galilee, Israel



Yahweh of the Old Testament, Zeus of the ancient Greeks and the sky gods of primitive belief are all examples of the High God, a supreme being who is the lord of life and death

HIGH GODS

AN OMNIPOTENT and omniscient creator god, living in, or more often identified with, the sky, is known as a 'High God'; the term appears to have been coined towards the end of the last century by the Scottish anthropologist and folklorist Andrew Lang. In a chapter of his book *The Making of Religion* (1898) entitled 'High Gods in Low Races', he points out that, if the evidence is to be trusted, many pre-literate peoples believe in a Supreme God in the sky, a being who takes precedence over lesser gods, ghosts and demons.

Lang could not imagine that this belief in a High God could have 'evolved out of the maleficent ghost of a... medicine-man' but did not go so far as to suggest that religion therefore originated in some primeval monotheism, from which it degenerated into animism. 'Both elements,' he wrote, 'are found co-existing, in almost all our races, and nobody, in our total lack of historical information about the beginnings, can say which, if either element is the earlier, or which, if either, is derived from the other.'

At the time, Lang's views were largely ignored by the scholarly world as just the day-dreams of a dilettante, but the work of a number of later scholars, among them W. Schmidt in Austria, R. Pettazzoni in Italy and G. Widengren in Sweden, has confirmed the essential correctness of his analysis. Almost all primitive races do in fact have some belief in a High God; evidence of such belief can be found among primitive societies in Australia, Africa, the Americas and Asia.

It must be emphasized, however, that nowhere is the belief in a High God dissociated from belief in lower gods and other spiritual beings; accordingly, the gods of primitive man normally take on the appearance of a hierarchy. The High God is supreme, all-powerful, omniscient, the lord of life and death; but since he is so powerful and so remote, it is usually necessary to approach him through his lesser servants. Frequently, in practice, his very remoteness means that he receives no particular worship, the people preferring to concern themselves rather with winning the favour of his emissaries. In extreme cases, it may be proper to speak of him as a *deus otiosus*, 'a resting god', who has deliberately withdrawn into his inaccessible heaven away from human ken.

Lord of the Elements

Widengren has pointed out that the High God is master of human destiny, but that he is above good and evil. He may be regarded, more tangibly, as both good and evil, or at least as completely unpredictable; the aspects of good and evil may become virtually separate deities, or even come to be regarded in myths as his 'sons'. In some cases the High God, particularly as Creator, may be regarded as both male and female; the idea is that the High God contains within himself all contradictions, and is beyond all such this-worldly distinctions.

High Gods are generally identified with the sky, and their attributes are often associated with the weather; Zeus, the supreme deity of the Greeks, was armed with thunderbolts which he used against the Giants when they attempted to overthrow the gods: painting by Perin del Vaga

Since the High God is identified with the sky, it is only natural that celestial and atmospheric phenomena should be seen as evidence of his working. These include the sun, moon and stars, which may be regarded as the god's eyes, or worshipped seperately as independent, though subordinate deities; and storm, wind, rain, thunder and lightning, which may again be attributes of the High God, or may take on an independent existence within a separate sphere between heaven and earth.

'Piler of Clouds'

So it is, for instance, that many of the attributes and epithets of the Greek Zeus such as *keraunios*, 'lord of lightning', and *nephelegereta*, 'piler of clouds', have to do with the weather, while others refer to his character as giver of fertility, or to his authority over the fates and the lives of men. Similar characteristics may be observed in ancient Roman religion, where Jupiter, the parallel of Zeus, is variously known as *Iuppiter Fulgar*, 'lightning', *Iuppiter Tonans*, 'thundering', or *Iuppiter Pluvialis*, 'raining'.

In the Old Testament, Yahweh exhibits most of the characteristics of a High God; he rules the tempest and the hurricane; he 'sits enthroned over the flood' (Psalm 29.10); he gives grain, and wine, and oil; the farmer is taught his business by God; and of course he created earth, sky and the heavenly bodies, as well as man. 'I made the earth, and created man upon it; it was my hands that stretched out the heavens, and I commanded all their host.' (Isaiah 45.12). Yahweh is lord of fate and not to be questioned: 'I will be gracious to him to whom I will be gracious, and will show mercy on whom I will show mercy' (Exodus 33.19).

Although in cases such as this, the work of creation is entirely carried out by the High God, in other primitive societies it was held that the world in its present form is rather the work of some subordinate being. This pattern is clearly seen in the religion of the North American Indians, where there are many High Gods, the Algonquin Kitci Manitou, the Pawnee Tirawa-Atius, the Sioux Wakonda or Wakan Tanka and the Winnebago Earthmaker, but where the Supreme Being is not thought to intervene directly in human affairs.

Old habits of thought die slowly, and it is still common to find scholars and others who regard the figure of the High God as a relatively late development in the history of religion. Close study of the evidence reveals, however, that this is very far indeed from being the case. Indeed, man's earliest religious experience may conceivably have been his sense of standing under the power and protection of the over-arching sky. Whether or not this is the case, the figure of the High God is now recognized as being almost universal in the religion of early man. What the result will be for the general theory of religious evolution it is still too early to say.

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WALTER HILTON

A MYSTICAL WRITER in the great tradition of English devotional literature, Walter Hilton was one of a group of 14th-century English mystics who included Richard Rolle, Julian of Norwich and the anonymous author of the *Cloud of Unknowing*. All that is known of him is that he lived during the 14th century, that fairly late in life he joined the order of Augustinian canons at Thurgarton in Nottinghamshire, and that he died in about 1395.

Of his writings there are three that can be attributed to him without doubt, and several others which are probably his. His major work is the *Scale of Perfection*, first printed by Wynkyn de Worde in 1494. *The Epistle to a Devout Man in a Temporal Estate*, also known as *Epistle on Mixed Life* (1506), and *The Song of the Angels* (1521), are the two other works which were certainly written by him.

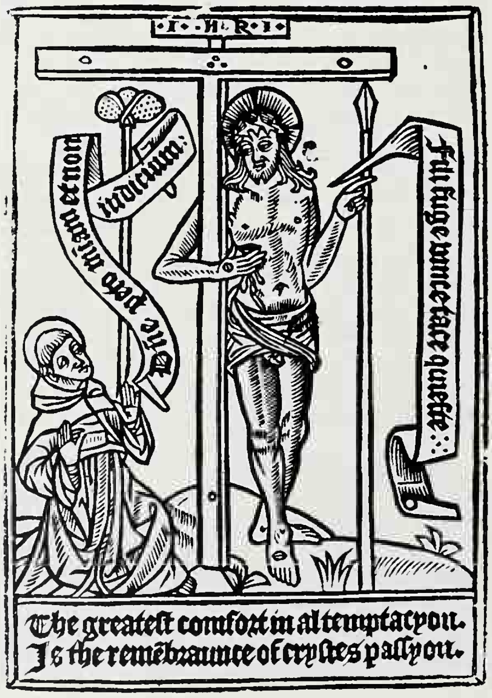
Among those attributed to this writer at one time was the *Imitation of Christ* which, as almost everyone now agrees, was written by Thomas à Kempis. Hilton's supposed authorship of it can probably be explained by the fact that a manuscript in Latin and English called *Musica Ecclesiastica* was in circulation in the 15th century soon after Hilton's death. The first three sections of this manuscript are identical with the first three books of the *Imitation*. If, as seems probable, the *Imitation* first reached England anonymously, when it was translated into English it was attributed to the best-known mystical writer in English.

Walter Hilton is known to have been friendly with and influenced by the Carthusian monks, whose priory at Beauvale, founded in 1343, was near Thurgarton; his teaching reflects therefore something of their traditions. It is not surprising that it should do so for Hilton was in the mainstream of the Alexandrian tradition, as represented by 'Dionysian' mysticism – derived from the Christian saint Dionysius the Areopagite, not the Greek god – which had begun to spread throughout Europe in the Middle Ages. Hilton also reflects some of the ideas of the unknown author of the *Cloud of Unknowing* and it is not surprising that this work too has been ascribed to him.

The *Scale of Perfection* is a remarkable and valuable treatise on the spiritual life; it has been called a guidebook for the journey to the spiritual Jerusalem which Hilton describes as 'contemplation in perfect love of God'. Like all the 14th-century school of English mystical writers, and unlike the Rhineland and Flemish mystics who are speculative, Hilton is severely practical. He is writing for an anchoress, a female recluse, and he takes it for granted that her goal is to strive for contemplation, which he described as the restoration, the 'reforming', of the image of God in man.

Before the Fall man was in the image of God; the three powers of man's soul – memory, understanding and will – were directed primarily to God. As a result of Adam's sin man fell from this happy state 'into forgetfulness and ignorance of God, and into a monstrous love of himself'. Through Christ's Passion and death man can be restored to the image of God fully only in heaven, partially here on earth. This partial restoration may be in faith only, when a man is in a state of grace; or in faith and feeling, when by the power of the Holy Ghost man is aware of the working of grace in him. To reach this state is the object of the contemplative life.

The *Scale of Perfection* has sometimes been called a 'guidebook for the jouney to the spiritual Jerusalem': frontispiece to edition in the British Museum


I·N·R·I
Dne da miam et non iudicium:
Fili fuge uince tace quiesce
The greatest comfort in all temptacyon.
Is the remembraunce of crystes passyon.

John Webb

Contemplation is reached by the action of God in the soul; and Hilton goes on to speak of the effects that it produces in the soul. The distinguishing marks of the book are beauty of thought and simplicity of expression and homely and effective imagery; although it is concerned with an advanced state of the spiritual life it is full of practical guidance.

Hilton's *Epistle to a Devout Man in a Temporal Estate* has some affinities with the *Introduction to a Devout Life* by St Francis de Sales (see FRANCIS DE SALES). It contains spiritual guidance and counsel for a religious man of wealth and social position, showing how the activities that are inseparable from his state of life may be pleasing to God, and used as a means to inflame desire for him and for the spiritualization of ordinary life. *The Song of the Angels* is a mystical treatise dealing with the action by God on the soul of the contemplative, and the spiritual consolations granted here on earth to the soul that is 'in perfect charity and purified by love'.

Hilton, like the other English mystics of the 14th century, was writing before Ignatius Loyola, Teresa of Avila and John of the Cross had schematized methods of mental prayer (see TERESA OF AVILA; JOHN OF THE CROSS). So his approach is simpler; for him the basis of prayer is what has come to be known as 'vocal' prayer, as distinct from 'mental' prayer. Anything beyond this he regards as inspired or contemplative, at least to some degree.

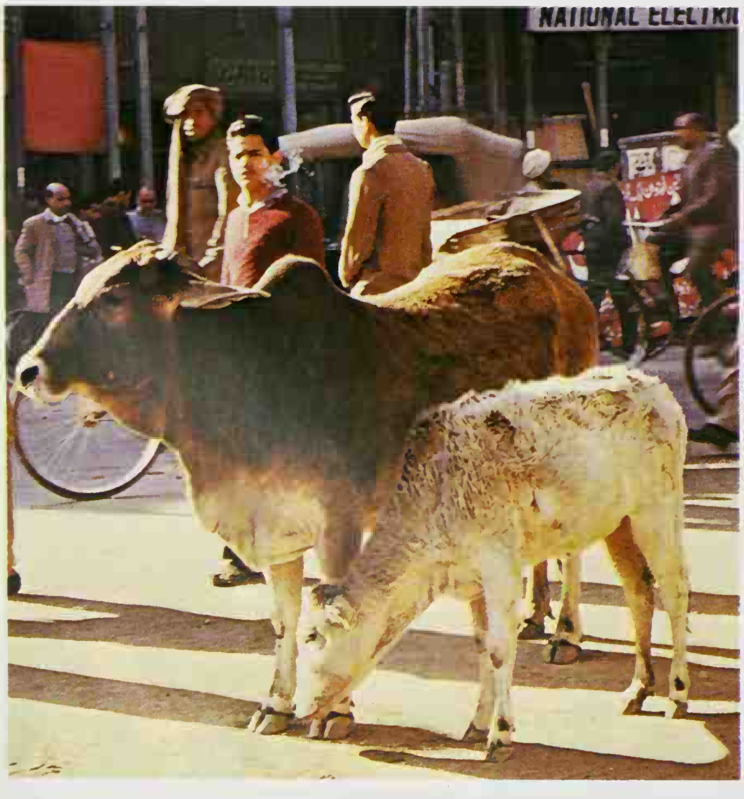
Lastly he is practical. Compared with the rather fearsome programmes of physical penance, fasting and other hardships recommended by some of the mystics and spiritual writers of his period, Hilton's advice is strikingly sane. 'Moderation is best' he says.

FURTHER READING: *Scale of Perfection* translated into modern English with introduction and notes by G. Sitwell (Burns and Oates, 1953); see also Geraldine E. Hodgson *English Mystics (*Gordon Press, 1977) and G. Sitwell, *Medieval Spiritual Writers*, *(*Burns and Oats, 1961).

HINDUISM

Previous page Many Hindu images are shown seated upon a lotus, like this flower-strewn holy man in the temple of Lakshmi Narayana in Delhi; the lotus, an important religious symbol, generally signifies creative force. Lakshmi, the lotus goddess, was the wife of Vishnu and goddess of fertility and fortune *Above* Hinduism embraces many sects, including the worship of the sun god Surya as supreme deity. One of Surya's devotees, while bathing in a sacred pool, turns to face the sun as he worships

Below left Cows wander freely in the streets of Delhi. Devout Hindus respect all animal life but cows in particular are venerated; their slaughter is forbidden and all their products are held sacred *Below right* Many Hindu organizations resist the movement to introduce cow slaughter *Right* The giant-sized effigy represents the wicked King Ravana of Lanka (Ceylon), leader of the Rakshasas or demons, whose defeat at the hands of Rama is celebrated at the festival of Dussehra, held in October



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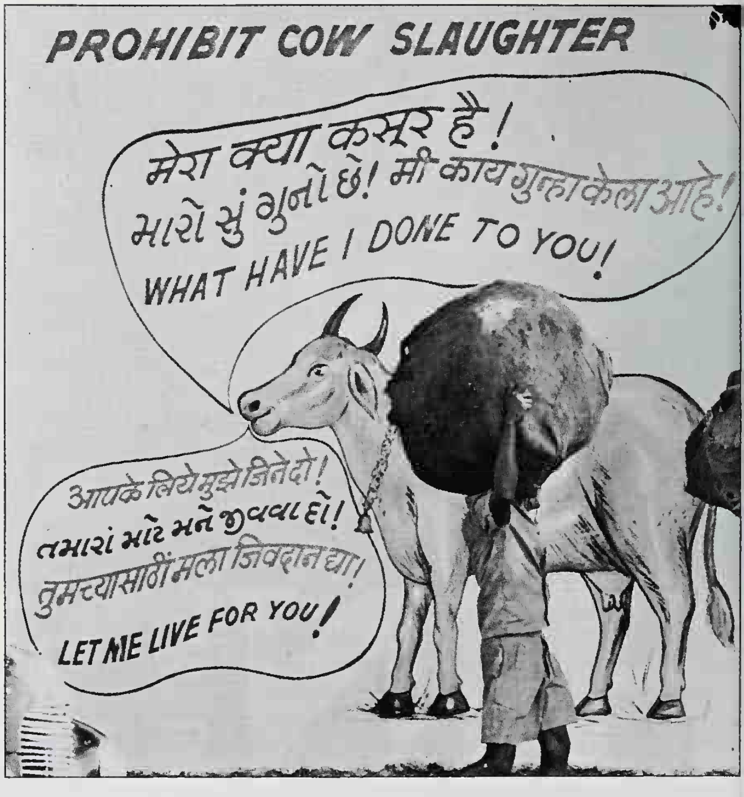


PROHIBIT COW SLAUGHTER
मेरा क्या कसूर है! મારો શું ગુનો છે! मी काय गुन्हा केला आहे! WHAT HAVE I DONE TO YOU!
आपके लिये मुझे जिने दो! તમારાં માટે મને જીવવા દો! तुमच्यासाठीं मला जिवदान द्या! LET ME LIVE FOR YOU!

Transworld Feature Syndicate

'Hinduism has always been mystical to its core, since it has always taught that by Yogic techniques man can realize here and now the eternal and divine within himself. So immanent is the Deity that to claim to be God is quite natural since, in some sense, everything is God'

'HINDU' is a Persian word and it means simply 'Indian'. Thus for the Moslem invaders of India the 'Hindu' religion was identified with the Indian people. It was the national religion of India, just as Judaism is the national religion of the Jews. The Indians themselves, however, never refer to their religion as the 'Indian' religion: rather they call it the *Sanatana Dharma*, the 'eternal *dharma*', distinguishing it thereby from all other religions, which have known founders and are therefore rooted in history. Hinduism is 'eternal and ageless' (*Sanatana*): it has no known founder and is considered to have existed for all time. But this does not mean that its forms do not change in the course of time: the essence is changeless but the forms in which it expresses itself are ever-changing. It is the religious expression of the very stuff of Nature and the Divine as the Hindus see them – perpetual change seen against a changeless and timeless background.

Hinduism is also a dharma, a word which has a great variety of meanings. It is derived from the root *dhr* which means 'to hold together' – something, therefore, that gives coherence to what appears to have none. Etymologically it is connected with Latin *firmus*, 'firm', and *forma*, 'form', the abiding form of things that makes them as they are and not otherwise. In this sense it is 'law', both the eternal law that governs Nature and the moral law that rules or should rule among men: it is law, religion and righteousness, the norm by which men live in the wider context of Nature and the universe. It is not something man-made but the principle that governs all things and to which the gods themselves are subject.

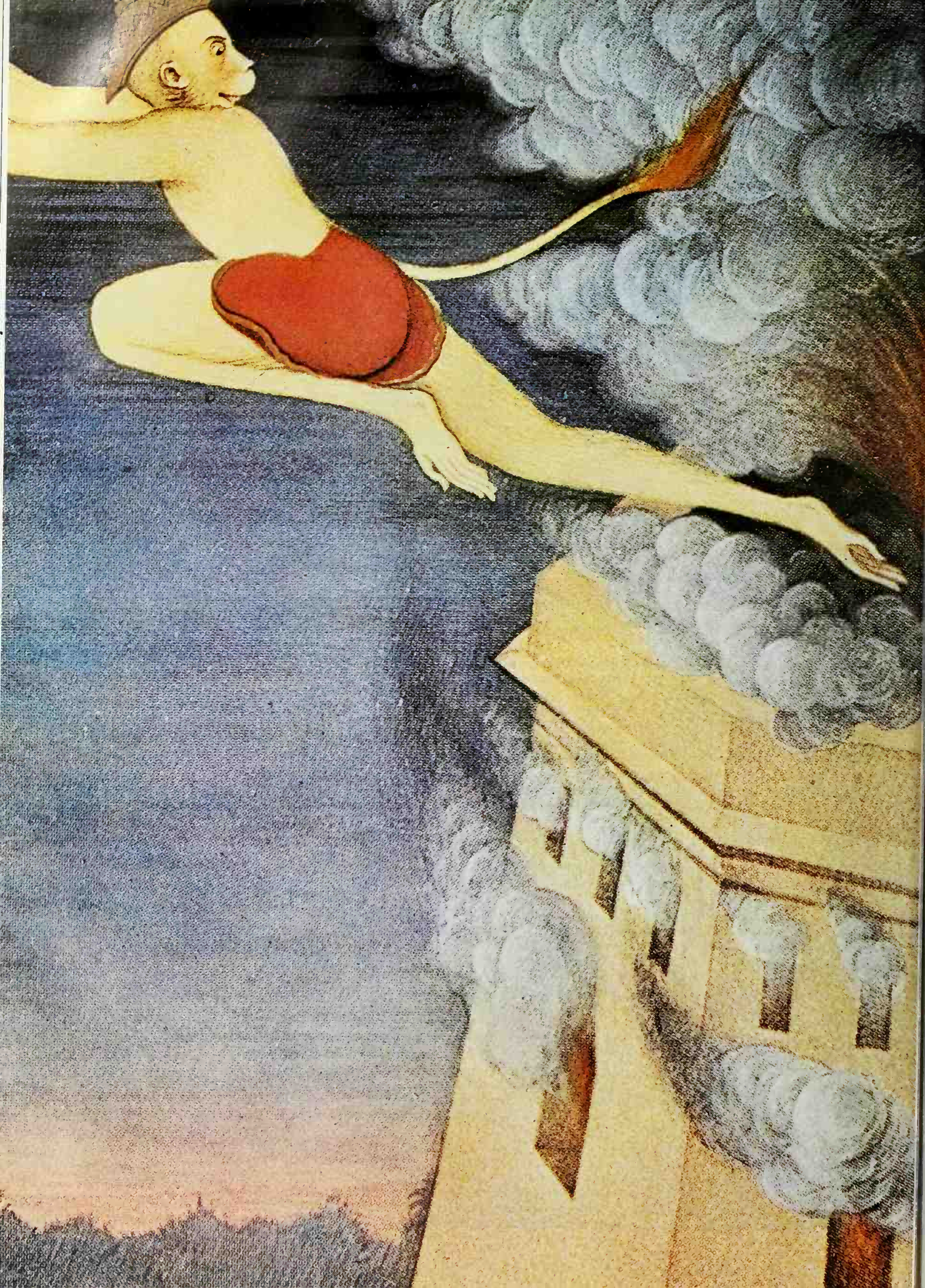
'The gods' because Hinduism is a polytheistic religion, but a polytheism that is also in some sense a monotheism. This sounds paradoxical but it is not really so, for even in the earliest times the gods are only manifestations of an immanent and unitary principle which is the ground of the universe – a principle that is at first regarded as being an impassive absolute but which may also appear as a personal God.

The Veda

Although Hinduism has no founder it has, like all the 'higher' religions, a body of sacred literature. This is called the *Veda*, a word meaning 'wisdom' or 'knowledge'. The Veda is a vast collection of sacred texts containing material that seems to have little coherence, for its earliest strata which are frankly polytheist seem to be quite different from the later which are frankly pantheist (holding that God is in everything). It is the latter period, however, that is important, for it set the tone once for all for the later development of this highly complex religion.

There are three strata within the Vedic canon: the *Samhitas*, the *Brahmanas* and the *Upanishads*, succeeding each other in time and each expressing a different point of view. In the *Samhitas* we meet with a polytheism that is recognizably related to that of the Latins and Greeks, but more clearly so to the religion of India's neighbours the Iranians, who share many of the Indians' gods. The *Samhitas*, usually called simply the 'Veda', were originally three in number, and they are composed of hymns extolling one or other of the gods who make up the Vedic pantheon. These hymns were the accompaniment of the all-important sacrifice, the function of which was to mediate the good things of this world to man. The gods were real and powerful, and the sacrifice was the means by which contact was established between them and man to the mutual advantage of each. Through the sacrifice man gave gifts to the gods so that the gods might give man gifts in return – prosperity, abundance of sons, victory in war, and so on: 'for sustained by sacrifice the gods will give you the food of your desire. Whoso enjoys their gift yet gives nothing in return is a thief, no more nor less,' as the *Bhagavad Gita* says. By sacrifice too man enters into communion and fellowship with the gods: he partakes of their nature and thereby of their immortality.

In the second stratum of the Vedic canon, the *Brahmanas*, sacrifice becomes all-important. It is the reflection of the world-process itself, and its correct performance assures the regular working of the cosmic process. In a sense it *is* the cosmic process, and since the gods themselves are dependent



Liberation from Life's Pigsty

In Hindu mythology there is a story of Indra, king of the gods, who once became a pig and lived very happily in his sty with his family. Missing their king, the gods came down from heaven and said: "O Indra, you are king of all the gods, why do you wallow in this mire?" And Indra replied: "Leave me alone. I am quite happy here. Why should I care for gods and heaven when I have my family?" Being at their wits' end, the gods finally slew Indra's sow and all the little pigs; seeing them all lying dead, Indra began to wail and mourn. Whereupon the gods ripped open the pig-body of their king and Indra came out, and laughed at the hideous dream he had had. He wondered how he ever could have been happy in that pig-life, even to the point of wanting the whole world to share in it!

Man in his ignorance clings to his limited consciousness and the surface life of his wakeful state. Yet he is not exactly satisfied, for there is always a sense of lack and of unfulfilled desires as long as he remains within the boundary of his limited consciousness. When his discrimination ripens he begins to realize the vanity and emptiness of this prolonged dream – the so-called normal consciousness – and there arises in him a longing for God, for the abiding Reality behind the changing phenomena of life. This longing has to be intensified. Sri Ramakrishna used to give the illustration: a disciple went to a teacher and asked to be taught the knowledge of God. The teacher remained silent. When the disciple had repeated his request many times, the teacher took him to a river, and suddenly taking hold of him, held his head under water for a long time. When he let go he asked him how he had felt while under the water. As soon as the disciple could speak he said, "O for a breath of air!" Then the teacher said, "When you can long for God as intensely as you longed for air, you will find Him."

Swami Prabhavananda 'God in Everything'
(in C. Isherwood ed. *Vedanta for the Western World*)

n this process, the sacrifice now takes recedence over the gods who *must* thereore do what the sacrifice demands of them. The gods are thereby demoted and become ttle more than the servants of the sacrifice nd of man who manipulates it. The stage is ow set for the third stage in the Vedic evelopment, the stage represented by the *Upanishads*.

In the course of time the supreme efficacy f the sacrifice came to be demoted: the upposedly infallible magic no longer eemed to work, for whatever the sacrifice might bring about, it could not satisfy ndian man's deepest desire, his desire to ranscend the world of flux and to win for imself immortality. The old religion of the gods had already passed away in favour of an all-pervasive and all-powerful sacrifice. And now, in its turn, the sacrifice too must pass away. External religion has proved a broken reed: man must turn his glance within himself, for it is only there that he can discover the immortal principle which at the same time sustains the whole dharma of the universe.

This is the crucial turning-point in Indian religion. The ancient polytheistic heritage which the Indians had shared with their sister Indo-European peoples is now definitely put behind them, the gods surviving only as superior beings, differing from men in length of days and power but subject, like men, to the relentless wheel of birth and death, re-birth and re-death. The early Indians did not believe in reincarnation but believed that men lived only once, being rewarded at death by a life of bliss in heaven with the gods, if they had lived a good life, or by punishment in hell if they had done evil. This uncomplicated belief they had shared with the Iranians. But now all this was to change.

We can only assume that the original inhabitants of India, whom the invading Aryans conquered, held religious beliefs totally different from those of their conquerors; and, as is so often the case, the religion of the conquered utterly transformed or replaced the religion of the victors. So it must have been in India; for it seems clear that the Dravidians, as the native inhabitants are called, must have believed in reincarnation with a total belief; for, from the time of the *Upanishads* on this belief becomes ineradicably ingrained not only among what we may now call the orthodox Hindus, but also among the Buddhists and Jains who split away from them. So strong was this belief that it would be wrong to call it a dogma. It is much more than this; it is accepted as a self-evident fact of existence that no sensible person would query. And it is this that in part accounts for the totally new perspective of the *Upanishads*.

A famous episode from the *Ramayana*: the demons of Lanka set fire to the tail of the monkey god Hanuman when he came to spy out their defences, but he, jumping from building to building, set the enemy citadel ablaze before making his escape

The Grievous Burden

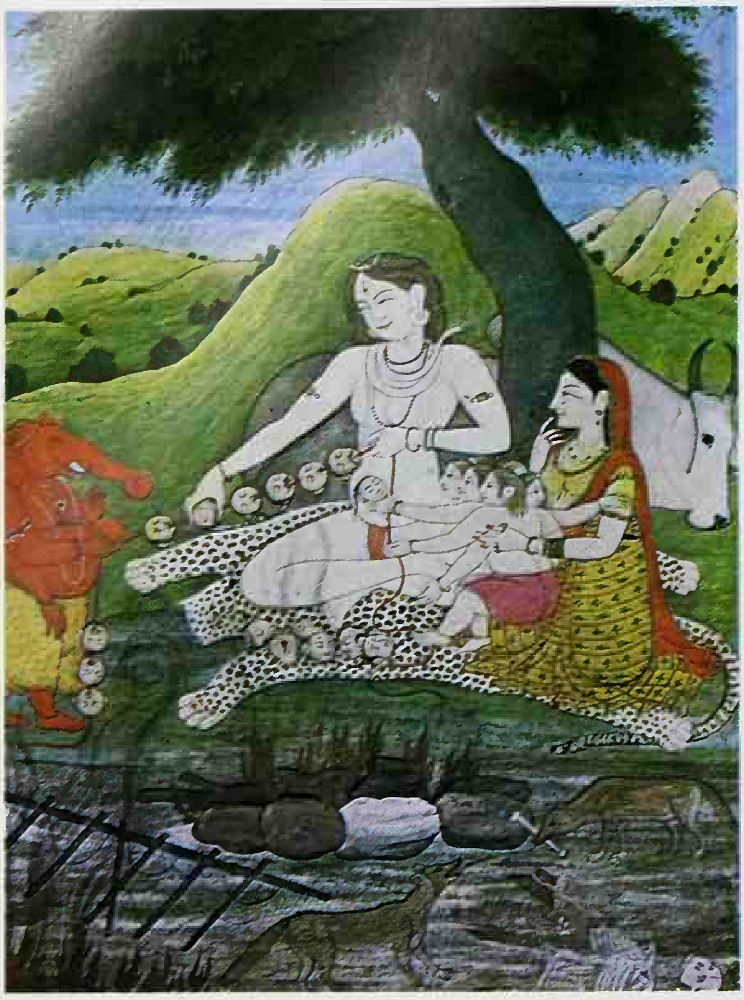
But in part only: for throughout the earlier Vedic literature a tendency had developed which tended to identify everything with an all-embracing Whole: the plurality of gods were seen to reflect one single reality and the sacrifice was thought of as identical with the world-process or at least as a reflection of it. One thing was generally agreed and that was that life in its endless repetitions was a burden too grievous to be borne and that the one thing needful was somehow or other to put a stop to it forever, to break away from it and so to become free. But how?

The Buddha who appeared in the 6th century BC claimed to have found the definitive answer. The world of flux in which we live, to which we return and from which, apparently, we cannot escape, is by its very impermanence synonymous with suffering. The cause of suffering is desire. Find a way of life which eliminates desire, and you will have won salvation. But salvation is not at all what Christians understand by that word, but rather total liberation from the shackles of earthly life which tie us remorselessly to impermanence and pain. The way of life which leads to the transcendence of earthly life as we know it the Buddha claimed to have found: he called it the Noble Eightfold Path, and it led one to a type of existence totally distinct from the life we know, a state called Nirvana, which means the extinction of desire and therewith of all becoming, of all coming-to-be and passing away. Nirvana is pure impassivity and impassibility, a timeless citadel to which the seeming pleasures and real sufferings that bedevil our life in time have no access. Between the two there is a gulf fixed and man's goal is to pass, by dint of much religious effort, to the stable and inviolate state of Nirvana (see BUDDHISM; NIRVANA).

This was the Buddhist solution but it was not the way of the *Upanishads*. The Buddhists were not interested in any Absolute on which the world of relativity might depend: they were interested only in escaping from the relative world altogether. The Hindus were more metaphysically minded; above all they wanted to know what was the changeless principle that held the changing world together and gave it coherence.

'What is it on which the worlds are woven, warp and woof?' 'Who is it, abiding in the earth, who is other than the earth, whom the earth does not know, whose body is the earth, who controls the earth from within?' These were the kind of questions they were asking. This unknown Something they called Brahman (which originally meant 'sacred utterance' or 'sacred action') or Atman (originally meaning perhaps 'breath' but very soon settling down in the meaning 'self'). Their answers were at first perhaps rather naive: it was food, or it was breath, mind, understanding, space or joy. None of these answers, however, seemed satisfactory; for when all was said and done, this eternal Something could indeed by experienced, but it could not be described. 'This Self – what can you say of it but "No, no!" It is impalpable, for it cannot be grasped; indestructible, for it cannot be destroyed; free from attachment, for it is not attached to anything, not bound. It does not quaver, nor can it be hurt.' Whatever it is, it is the timeless and spaceless principle of eternal Being which indwells the heart of man and which envelops and exceeds the whole physical universe (see BRAHMAN).

The account of Brahman in the *Upanishads* is a brave attempt to put into words an essentially mystical experience which transcends verbalization. It is what is sometimes called 'cosmic consciousness' which, in the words of a modern Canadian author who had the experience himself, shows 'the cosmos as entirely immaterial, entirely spiritual and entirely alive, it shows that death is an absurdity, that everyone and everything has eternal life; it shows that the



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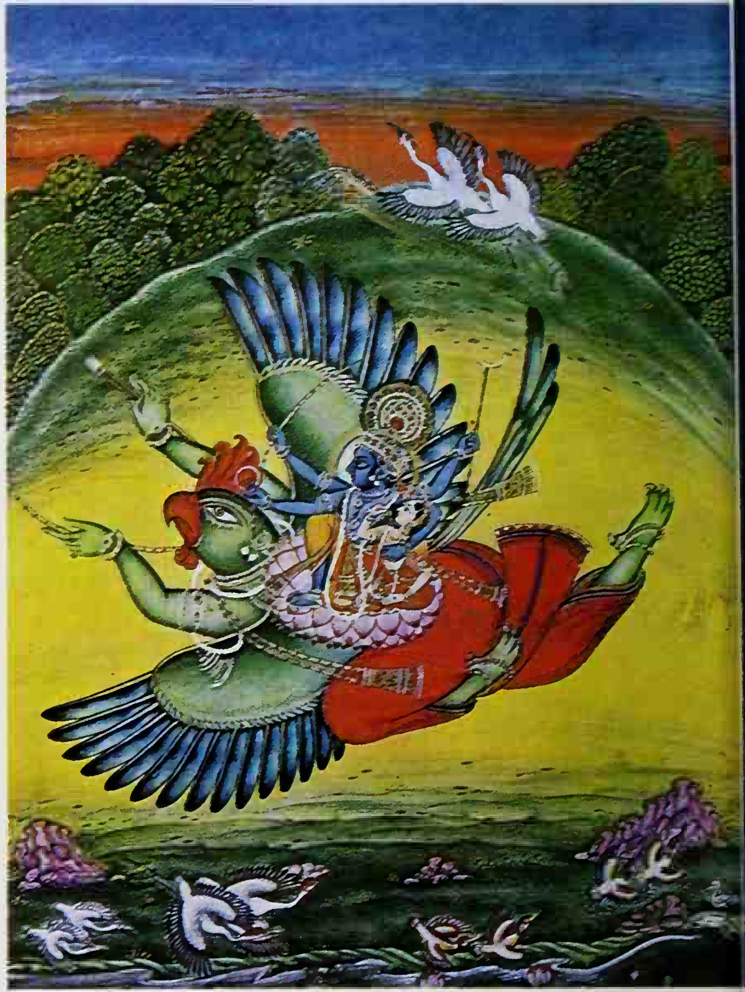


Shiva and Vishnu each appears as supreme God in Hinduism *Left* Shiva with his wife Parvati and sons Ganesha and Karttikeya, the elephant-headed god and the six-faced god of war; Shiva and Ganesha are stringing together the skulls of the dead, for Shiva in one of his aspects presided over cremation grounds *Above* Vishnu and his wife Lakshmi riding Garuda; besides acting as the chariot of Vishnu, Garuda, half man and half bird, was king of the birds and the enemy of serpents *Right* Vishnu is worshipped particularly in his eighth reincarnation as the handsome, dark-skinned Krishna, who inspired passionate desires by the sweet music of his flute; the love of Krishna and the milk-girl Radha, celebrated in hundreds of poems and paintings, is sometimes taken to represent the union of the soul with its God

universe is God and that God is the universe, and that no evil ever did or ever will enter into it.' This is absolutely true of the dominant thought-pattern of the *Upanishads*: the man who has realized himself as Brahman has passed beyond good and evil. Being the All and at one with the principle that keeps the All in being, he is invulnerable because he is outside time and cannot be affected by what takes place in time.

> Those who see all beings in the Self
> And the Self in all beings
> Will never shrink from it.
>
> When once one understands that in oneself
> The Self's become all beings,
> When once one's seen the unity
> What room is there for sorrow?
> What room for perplexity?

These passages are typical of the pantheism of the *Upanishads*. In the state they describe, all dualities, all seeming discords, disappear into a perfect harmony grounded in the One of which all so-called created things are only imperfect appearances. This is and remains the essence of Hinduism: what is divine and eternal in the heart of man is the same as the divine and eternal which pervades all Nature. If the essence of God is pure Being, then this is equally true of the essence of man. Since both are Brahman, it is possible to say that both are God. 'This finest essence – the whole universe has it as its Self: that is the Real: that is the Self: that *you* are.'

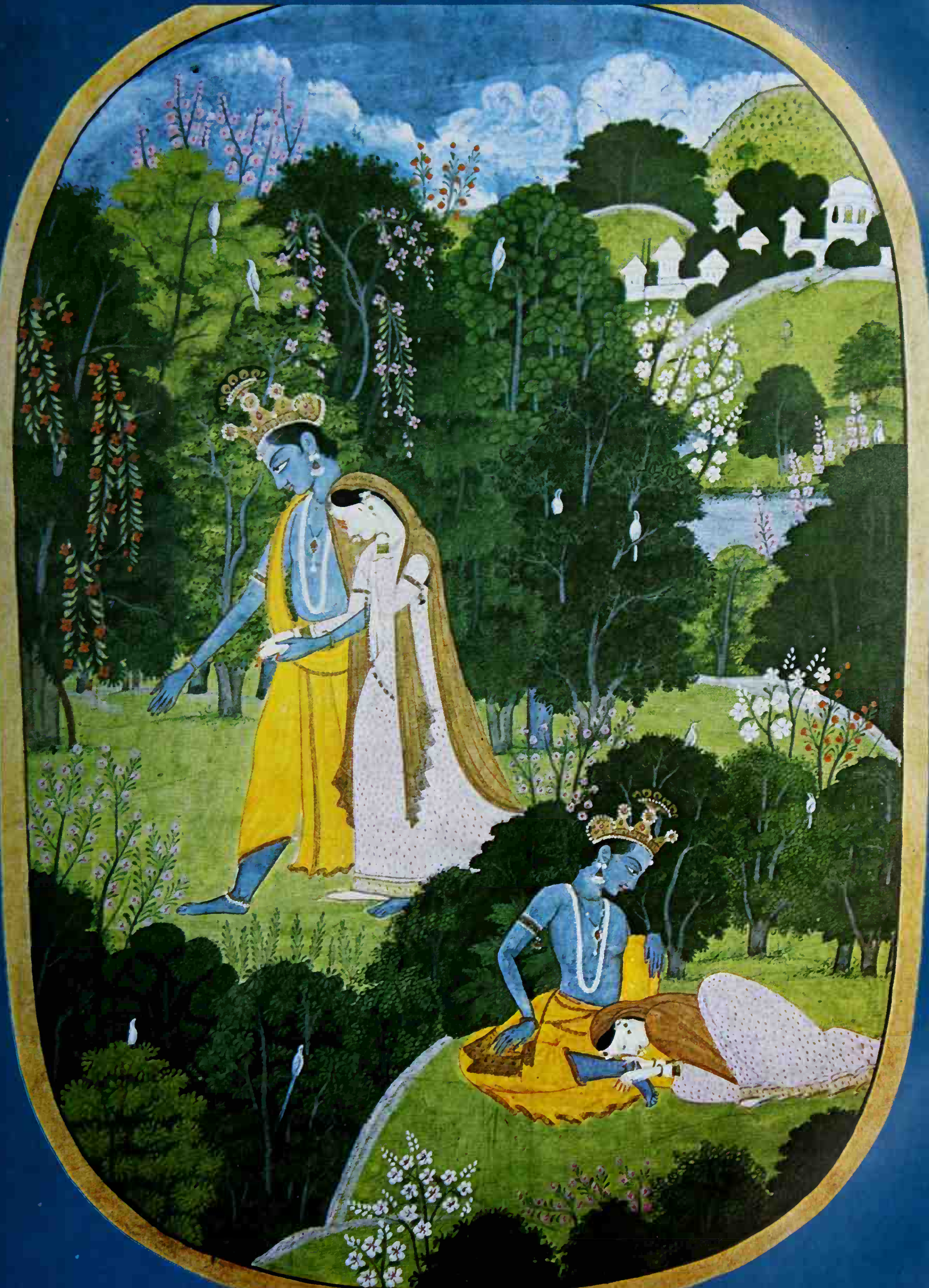
Here there is no attempt to separate the eternal from the temporal, the relative from the Absolute, for the 'All' – the universe – is at the same time the One, and by realizing the One Brahman in himself man realizes himself as God. This is the main tenor of the *Upanishads*, but since the Hindus were and are born metaphysicians, they were not prepared to let this pantheistic mystery be; and so in the later *Upanishads* two divergent trends develop, one 'monistic' and the other 'theistic'. The monistic tendency is represented by the *Mandukya Upanishad*, the 'theistic' by the *Svetasvatara*.

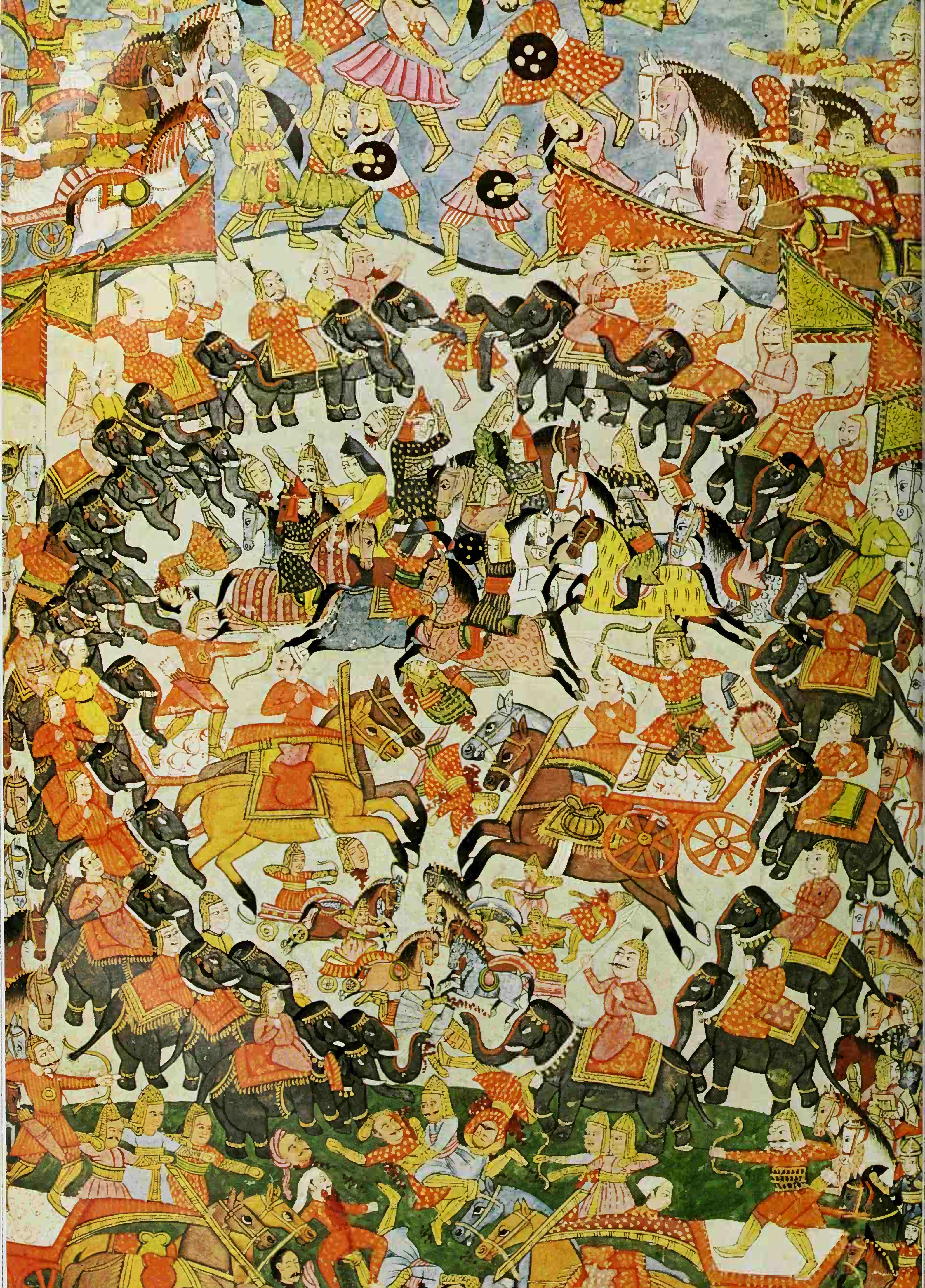
Following up earlier Upanishadic ideas, the *Mandukya* speaks of a 'fourth state' in which all is *absolutely* One, static and eternal. This is 'conscious of neither within nor without, nor of both together . . . one with whom there is no commerce, impalpable, devoid of distinguishing mark, unthinkable, indescribable, its essence the firm conviction of the oneness of itself, bringing all development to an end, tranquil and mild, devoid of duality, such do they deem this fourth to be. That is the Self: that is what should be known.'

This is the classical text on which the philosophy of absolute monism of Sankara and his school was to be based. It is a radical departure from the dominant Upanishadic position in which Brahman is seen as the One manifesting itself in the many: here the many are simply eliminated as being purely illusory. Only the One remains, and that is the *real* man and the divinity beyond God – God seen as creator and sustainer of the universe being, in the last analysis, as unreal as the universe he sustains. This absolute monism has dominated Indian philosophy from Sankara, who lived in the 9th century, up to the present time; but it has not dominated Indian religion, as indeed it could not, since it abolishes God as being ultimately unreal.

The Personal God

On the other hand, through the *Upanishads* a theistic movement had been developing which tended to make a distinction between the 'highest' Brahman, now called the 'Lord', and the individual 'selves' who had realized themselves as immortal and eternal. The 'Lord' who is at the same time the highest 'Self' of all things is now





'For the protection of the good, for the destruction of evil-doers, for the setting up of the law of righteousness I come into being age after age'

seen to transcend and comprise not only the universe but also all individual selves. The totality of existence is compared to a wheel, and of this wheel the Lord is both the hub and the rim whereas individual 'selves' are the spokes that connect the two: they are inseparable from God but they are not identical with him.

Brahman in the *Upanishads* was the 'Real of the real', transcending and indwelling both the eternal and the temporal. In the *Svetasvatara Upanishad* this supreme position is assigned to a personal God – the ancient Vedic god Rudra, who is now also referred to as Shiva (or Siva), the 'Mild'.

In the *Upanishads* Brahman is usually thought of as an impersonal Absolute, but sometimes he appears as a personal God. In the *Svetasvatara Upanishad* he or it is identified with the Vedic god Rudra. This *Upanishad* and the *Bhagavad Gita* complement each other, for in both a highly personal God is raised to a supreme eminence, higher than Brahman, the principle of eternity itself. In the *Svetasvatara* the God is Rudra-Shiva, in the *Gita* it is Vishnu incarnate as Krishna. Neither god was prominent in the earlier literature, and it still remains rather a mystery how these two gods finally emerged as God with a capital G. Each has his own characteristic mythology, but each is for his own devotees the supreme Being, both Brahman as eternal Being and the God from whom the universe emanates, by whom it is sustained and into whom it dissolves. Though Brahman may be both the eternal and the temporal, the great God Shiva rules over both these aspects of it.

> In the imperishable, infinite city of Brahman
> Two things there are –
> Wisdom and unwisdom, hidden, established there:
> Perishable is unwisdom, but wisdom is immortal:
> Who over wisdom and unwisdom rules, he is Another.

The *Svetasvatara Upanishad* is important because it exalts the personal God Shiva over both the perishable and imperishable aspects of existence. The destiny of the individual self which is a 'part' of God in some sense, however, still remains isolation or entry into Brahman (that is, eternity), not union with the personal God. As yet there is no idea of a real mystical *union* in and through love which is the core of the experience of the Christian mystics. All that will change in the *Bhagavad Gita*.

The army of the Kauravas clashes with the forces commanded by Abhimanyu, the son of Arjuna; the heroic wars between the Kauravas and their cousins the Pandavas form the subject of the immense Indian epic, the *Mahabharata*

A Religion of Love

In the *Bhagavad Gita* the supreme God is Vishnu, and he is incarnate in the form of Krishna (see BHAGAVAD GITA). The *Gita*, unlike the *Upanishads*, does not form part of the Veda, and theoretically it does not enjoy canonical authority. Its supreme importance was, however, acknowledged from very early times and not only has it been commented on by all philosophers of note, it has also been and remains a popular classic, which the more abstruse *Upanishads* have not. The reason is that it introduces an entirely new element into Hinduism, the element of love. For Vishnu, in his incarnation as Krishna, is above all a God of love, and the ideal becomes intimate union and communion with the incarnate God, both in his timeless essence and in his ceaseless beneficent activity in the world of action.

As in the *Svetasvatara Upanishad* God is Lord of the perishable and imperishable alike. The 'perishable' is identical with matter, and matter, though controlled by God, nevertheless does act as a barrier and a veil. Hence it is first of all necessary to divest oneself of matter and to realize one's own eternity, if one is to commune with God who is the source of both eternity and time. To 'see oneself in all beings and all beings in the self' is then only a preliminary to seeing all beings in God and God in all beings, and to realizing that this cosmic vision is to see everything with God's eyes, not with one's own. This makes the immortal timeless 'self' realize that he is not an independent unit but wholly dependent on God. This gives rise to a deep love of God and intimate communion with him, for the self or soul now realizes that this personal God, Vishnu-Krishna, is 'the base supporting Brahman – immortal Brahman which knows no change – supporting too the eternal law of righteousness and absolute beatitude'. By realizing one's own timeless immortality one becomes Brahman, and 'once a man has become Brahman, with self serene he neither grieves nor desires; the same to all contingent beings he gains the highest love and loyalty to me (Krishna is speaking). By love and loyalty to me he comes to know me as I really am, how great I am and who; and once he knows me as I am, he enters me forthwith.' And just as the liberated soul enters into God in an ecstasy of love, so does God love him in return.

This is the significance of the *Bhagavad Gita:* it exalts the personal God above Brahman seen as principle of eternity, and it shows that God is a God of love, identical with you in so far as you have Being, but separate from you in so far as he is the object and subject of love. After the *Bhagavad Gita* popular Hinduism becomes predominantly a religion of love.

Vishnu and Krishna

In the canon of the Veda the gods Vishnu and Shiva (Rudra) played a very minor part. Just how and when they rose to supreme eminence we do not know, but each of them appears as the Supreme Deity by the time of the *Mahabharata* (? 300 BC – 300 AD). At first there is rivalry between them, but later, as is usual in Hinduism, they coalesce, each being regarded as the 'personal' form of the Absolute. Thus Hindus tend to be worshippers of Vishnu or Shiva.

As the supreme God, Vishnu becomes incarnate from time to time, 'for whenever the law of righteousness withers away and lawlessness arises, then do I generate myself on earth. For the protection of the good, for the destruction of evil-doers, for the setting up of the law of righteousness I come into being age after age.' In fact Vishnu is worshipped not so much in himself as in his two principal incarnations, Rama and Krishna. Rama is the hero of a great epic, the *Ramayana*, and he is the model of ethical and chivalrous man – obedient to his parents, devoted to his wife, affectionate to his family, impatient of evil, brave, chivalrous and courteous. He is God incarnate as morality.

The Krishna of popular religion is not the Krishna of the *Bhagavad Gita* but the

R. K. Singh

Krishna who develops in the later literature, notably in the *Bhagavata Purana* dating from about the 9th century AD. Much more than Rama he is the object of the devotee's passionate love. Pre-eminently he is worshipped as a ravishingly handsome young cowherd who seduces the wives and daughters of the local cowherds with the sweet tones of his flute. He arouses passionate love in them and incites it the more in that from time to time he hides from them only to give himself more fully to them later. Sexual union is here used to represent the union of the soul with God.

This has sometimes shocked Protestant missionaries, but we find precisely the same phenomenon in the Christian mystical tradition, in which the Song of Songs, a clearly erotic poem which somehow or other found its way into the canon of the Old Testament, serves as a text on which to hang the most exalted conceptions of God's love for man. This does not, however, prevent the Krishna cult from degenerating at times into pure emotionalism, a frenzied ecstasy for its own sake. Then the devotee imagines that he or she is Radha, Krishna's beloved concubine, and gives himself or herself up to him in total self-immolation; for in its relationship to the Deity the soul is always female, God the male.

Shiva and Shakti

Shiva is an altogether more austere deity. He is an extraordinarily complex figure, for he is both the model of all Yogins and ascetics and the ithyphallic God who delights in the worship of his erect phallus. As ascetic he is eternally at rest (the static 'Imperishable' of the *Upanishads*), 'isolated' and rapt in the contemplation of his own unfathomable Being, while in his phallic capacity he is eternally productive of forms. In him the infinite (the male principle) and the finite (the female) meet, and in him all the opposites are reconciled. In mythology Shiva has a consort variously called Uma, Parvati, Durga or Shakti (Sakti). In theology this consort, appearing in the form of Shakti, represents the divine creative power, very like the Christian Logos, that 'through which all things are made'. And so it is said that 'Shiva begets Shakti and Shakti gives birth to Shiva. Both in their happy union produce the worlds and souls. Still Shiva is ever chaste and the sweet-speeched Shakti remains ever a virgin. Only sages can comprehend this secret.' The soul in its relationship to Shiva through Shakti must again play the part of the female, abandoning itself wholly to the divine lover just as the individual 'self' is merged in the personal God in the *Bhagavad Gita*.

Sometimes, however, the divine Shakti is worshipped to the exclusion of Shiva; for in this scheme of things Shiva is forever immersed in Yogic trance and is therefore deaf to the prayers of men and unaware of their needs. Shakti, on the other hand, is creative force and destructive power, an intensely living Goddess and in her destructive aspect very much to be feared. In Bengal bloody sacrifices of goats are still offered to her in her terrible form of Durga, but this does not prevent her from being the object of intense and passionate devotion, for she is above all things the Mother and, despite all appearances to the contrary, really devoted to her children. The worship of Shakti in its so-called Tantric form (see TANTRISM) has always offended the puritanism of Anglo-Saxon missionaries; for her devotees of a later time would re-enact physically the ideal union of Shiva and Shakti, of the male and female principles in the One, by combining the strictest control of the senses with the sexual act itself. In this close embrace the cosmic unity is realized; the distinction between liberation and creativity, between eternity and time is transcended; and controlled sexuality is seen to reflect the Unity in diversity of cosmic existence.

Such practices, however, were aberrations from the norm of *Bhakti*, as the cult of loving devotion to a personal God was called. More typical are the hymns of the devotees of both Shiva and Vishnu in South India

The lofty metaphysics of the Vedas has been overlaid by the worship of countless idols though these may be explained as differen manifestations of the divine unity *Lef* Jewelled image of Hanuman *Above* Guardian deity from Nepal *Right* Surya the sun god, who with the weather god Indra and the fire god Agni formed a triad of ancient Vedic gods *Far right* Many-armed image of Shiva garlanded with flowers and riding a tiger; an extremely complex deity, Shiva was a god o both asceticism and sexuality

British Museum

William MacQuitty

vhich not only breathe a spirit of total self-bnegation but also a sense of deep unvorthiness that is truly reminiscent of Christianity at its best. Two examples must uffice: both are addressed to Shiva.

> Thou gav'st thyself, thou gained'st me;
>   Which did the better bargain drive?
> Bliss found I in infinity;
>   But what didst thou from me derive?
> O Shiva, Perundurai's God,
>   My mind thou tookest for thy shrine:
> My very body's thine abode;
>   What can I give thee, Lord, of mine?

r again we find a sense of deep guilt and nadequacy in the face of the divine majesty:

> Evil, all evil my race, evil my qualities all,
> Great am I only in sin, evil is even my good.
> Evil my innermost self, foolish, avoiding the
>   pure:
> Beast am I not, yet the ways of the beast I
>   can never forsake.
> I can exhort with strong words, telling men
>   what they should hate,
> Yet I can never give gifts, only to beg them
>   I know.
> Ah! wretched man that I am, whereunto came
>   I to birth?

o far we have been dealing with Hinduism s a religion of mystical salvation; and this s right, for the goal of life is *moksha*, iberation' from the bonds of earthly life hough not necessarily from earthly life tself. This 'liberation' can be experienced ither as 'cosmic consciousness' or as a ersonal God in an act of pure love. In any case 'liberation' is the consummation of the four legitimate aspirations of man. The other three are, in ascending scale: *Kama*, 'pleasure', *Artha*, 'the acquisition of wealth' and *Dharma*, 'righteousness'.

Four Stages of Life

In Hinduism there is room for everything – for the sexual adept described in the *Kama-sutras* as much as for the fiercest ascetic. There are endless discussions on the relative merit of *Kama*, *Artha* and *Dharma*; and although it is generally agreed that dharma, or the quest for righteousness, is the highest of the three, since it alone can create a condition of soul that fits it for 'liberation', the other two are nonetheless legitimate activities and should not be shunned by people who have a natural bent that draws them either to the satisfaction of their desires or to the amassing of a fortune. Indeed from the earliest times Hindu society was divided up into four main classes which roughly correspond to the four legitimate aspirations of man (see CASTE). Thus, men are not born equal, and this for the obvious reason that one's class or caste in this life depends on one's *Karma* in previous lives – on the good and evil deeds that have piled up to one's profit or loss throughout millennia of successive incarnations (see KARMA). What you have sown in previous lives you reap in this one. This is the automatic way of the world and there is no injustice in it.

No doubt the four great classes existed in all their purity in ancient times but very soon a full caste-system developed, each caste being governed by its own rules, particularly as regards marriage and diet. In addition to the ideal four-class system, which very soon ceased to have any relation to the social reality, the law-books laid down a fourfold way of life which members of the three 'twice-born' classes were theoretically supposed to follow. On attaining the age of reason and being invested with the sacred thread (a rite symbolizing his second birth), the now 'twice-born' youth was supposed to leave his home to study the scriptures with a Guru (spiritual director). To this Guru he owed absolute obedience and he had, moreover, to lead a life of complete chastity. Once he had become proficient in the scriptures he was to return home, take a wife, raise a family and, if possible, make a fortune. To his wife and family he would then be as a god and his wife in particular would owe him absolute obedience. The man was entitled to as many as four wives, but no woman could have more than one husband. There was no question of equality between the sexes.

This second stage of life is called that of a householder. It comes to an end when the householder 'sees that wrinkles are beginning to appear and that his hair is growing grey and when his sons are themselves fathers of sons'. At this point he should enter the third stage, that of a 'forest-dweller'. With or without his wife he retires to the forest where he lives on fruit and roots, wearing only a skin or tattered garment. He spends his time meditating on the *Upanishads* and chastising his body in

Bathing in Ganges

Little bands of men and women who had travelled here together from their villages, some of them very old with skin like crumpled parchment, the women singing sadly but triumphantly, lurched barefooted across the silt towards the pragwals, evil-looking men who performed their duties with an air of patent cynicism, in contrast with that of the pilgrims themselves who wore expressions of joy. They had all been shaven with varying degrees of severity in the barbers' quarter: women from the south and widows had had their head completely shaven; the men were left with their chhotis, the small tufts on the backs of their skulls, and those who had moustaches, but whose fathers were still alive, had been allowed to retain them; natives of Allahabad were allowed to keep their hair; Sikhs gave up a ritual lock or two. At one time the hair was buried on the shore of the river; now it was taken away and consigned to a deep part of the Ganges downstream. Like pilgrims everywhere they were not allowed much peace . . . policemen and officious young men wearing arm-bands tried to move them on, but they were in a state bordering on ecstasy, and were oblivious to everything but the river which they had come so far to see, bathe in and perhaps to die by this very morning; for some of them were so decrepit that it seemed impossible that they could survive the sudden shock of the immersion.

The women dressed in saris, the men in loin-cloths, they entered the river, dunking themselves in it, drinking it, taking it in their cupped hands and letting it run three times between their fingers with their faces towards the still invisible sun. Shivering but happy and, if they were fortunate enough to possess them, dressed in clean clothes, they allowed the pragwals to rub their foreheads with ashes or sandal wood and make the tilak mark. They offered flowers and milk to the river, and those who had never been there before bought half-coconuts from the pragwals and launched the shells filled with marigolds on the water, which were afterwards appropriated by the pragwals to be sold again.

Eric Newby *Slowly Down the Ganges*

preparation for the fourth and last stage, that of a fully-fledged Sannyasin (one who has finally renounced this world). He has now discharged his three 'debts'; he has absorbed the teaching of the Veda, has reared up sons to continue his line, and has offered sacrifice according to his ability. Still in the world though not of it, he is now ready to put aside for ever the fetters that bind him to death and re-birth.

The four classes of society and the four stages of life were supposed to be the framework within which society functioned. In practice the classes split up into and absorbed a vast variety of castes and sub-castes, each forming a self-contained social unit. The religious ideal for all remained 'liberation' but for the masses this always remained an infinitely distant ideal, for 'among thousands of men but one, maybe, will strive for self-perfection, and even among these Yogins who have won perfection but one, maybe, will come to know God as he really is.' This is not for the common run of men, who must pile up good Karma or 'merit' by the strict performance of their caste-duty, by performing the daily domestic rites, by frequenting the local temple, by pilgrimage to holy places, by being lavish in their gifts to Brahmins. Then at the end of countless incarnations they will have acquired sufficient merit to be reborn in the 'family of men well advanced in Yoga, possessed of insight.' But even so 'such a birth as this on earth is exceedingly hard to obtain.'

Reform and Renewal

The rise of the *bhakti* sects added a new dimension to Hindu spirituality but it did not threaten in any way the rigid social structure based on caste. Successive Moslem invasions from the 7th century on were quite another matter. Islam is of its nature a proselytizing religion, and with the conversion of the Central Asian Turks it became aggressively so. Conversions were effected *en masse* both by force and, more often, by consent, for conversion could only mean social improvement and emancipation for the lower castes and above all for the outcastes who were regarded as little better than animals. Hinduism's reaction to this stranger in its midst was to turn in upon itself; for Hinduism has always been mystical to its core, since it has always taught that by Yogic techniques man can realize here and now the eternal and divine within himself. So immanent is the Deity that to claim to be God is quite natural since, in some sense or other, everything is God. Hence the utterly transcendent Allah of Moslem orthodoxy held out no appeal for the Hindu. On the whole the new Moslem rulers did not interfere with his customs nor were they given to righteous indignation.

With the advent of the British and the Protestant missionaries who came in their wake things were very different. The missionaries were nothing if not stern moralists. To them the burning of widows, child marriages, and the treatment of the outcastes were an intolerable scandal, and they did not mince their words. However tactless they may have been, they did at least succeed in arousing a social consciousness among the Hindus which had been noticeably lacking before. In the first flush of their optimism the missionaries had hoped that the conversion of India might be in sight. They reckoned without the Hindus' endless capacity to adapt and absorb alien ideas. Conversions were few, largely because conversion meant a complete break with the family and the caste into which the family was compactly built, and so with the whole fabric of Hindu society. Hinduism, on its side, was quite happy to absorb whatever of Christianity it found to its liking.

Christianity entered India as the religion of a conquering and technically vastly superior race. The missionaries were well aware of this and regarded Hinduism as a hideous hotch-potch of idolatry and superstition, making no effort to penetrate to its inner core, let alone to assess its spiritual value. Among the educated Hindus some were indeed converted to Christianity. Others who realized that the strength of the British lay in their superior technocracy and perhaps also in the democratic principles they practised at home, not in their Christianity, abandoned religion altogether, while yet others sought to absorb the Christian ethic as preached in the Sermon on the Mount into Hinduism itself.

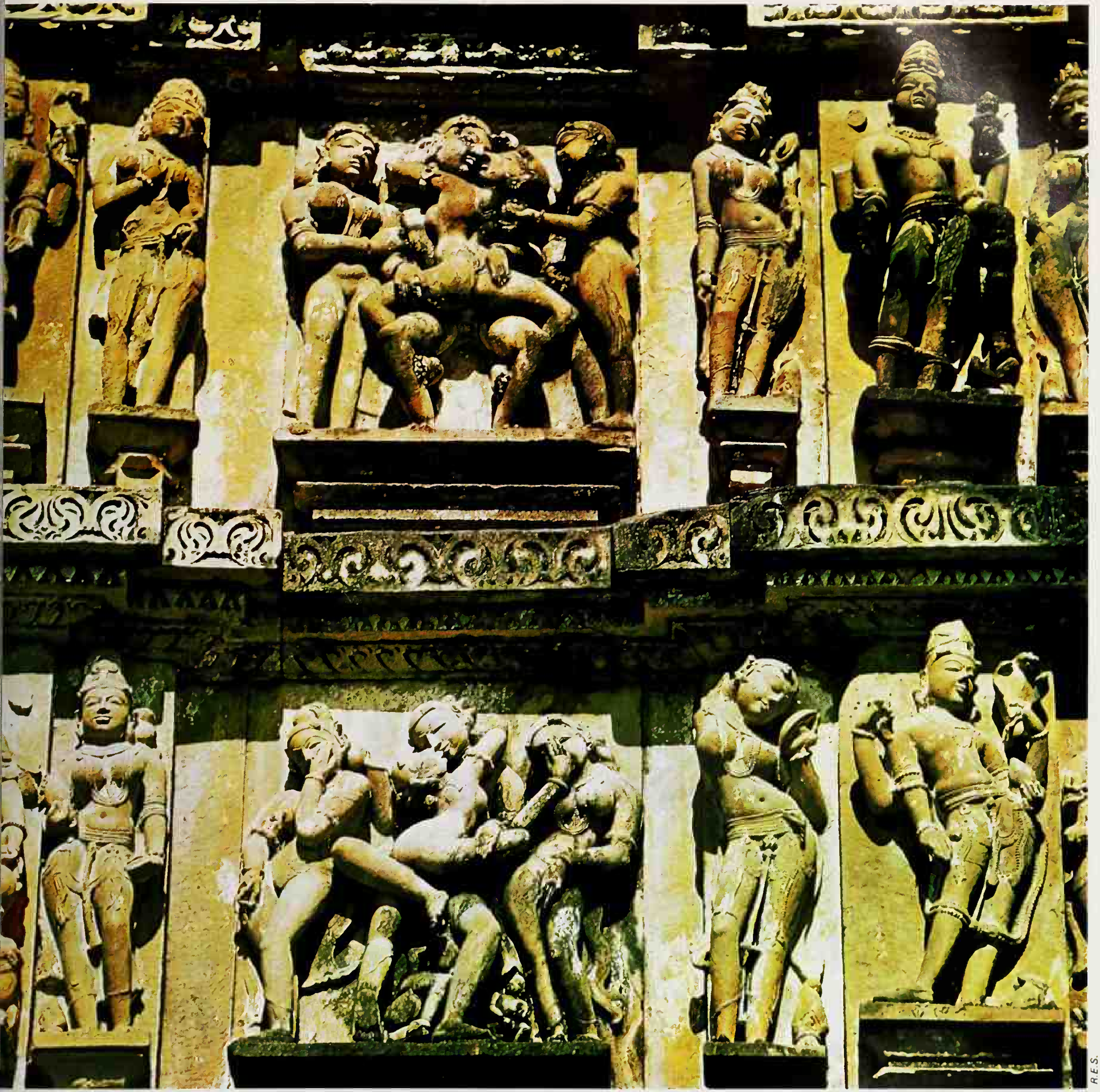
The various reformist Hindu sects of the 19th century and after oscillated between a policy of absorption and of reaction. The first of them, the Brahmo Samaj founded by Ram Mohan Roy, was as iconoclastic as its Protestant mentors. It turned its back on all the specifically Hindu rites and modelled its ritual on Protestant services. Though it had a certain success among the elite, it did not succeed in striking any deep roots and was in any case riddled with schism from the beginning.

Quite different was Dayananda's Arya Samaj; for while being quite as inimical to the corruptions of the Hinduism of its day, it did not look to Christianity for inspiration but to the most ancient stratum of the Veda as interpreted by Dayananda himself. With the Arya Samaj, Hinduism for the first time took the offensive against the imported creeds, Islam and Christianity. Its aim was both to reconvert those who had embraced Christianity and Islam, and to integrate the untouchables into its own form of Hinduism if not into orthodoxy itself.

Ramakrishna and Gandhi

Of more importance was the movement started by Ramakrishna Paramahamsa, and continued by Swami Vivekananda. The purely religious impetus was supplied by the first, the drive and organizing ability by the second. Ramakrishna was a charismatic personality and a visionary. He studied under every kind of Guru and even joined in the religious life of the Moslems and Christians. He continually had visions of the Divine Mother, to whom he remained passionately devoted; or again, imagining himself to be Radha, he would experience the presence of Krishna too. When among Moslem mystics he had a vision of Mohammed and study of the Christian Gospels duly induced a vision of Christ. The great variety of his religious experiences convinced him that all religions must be true, all being but different paths leading to the one goal which is to realize the absolute oneness of all things in the One Brahman. Hence, after he had himself realized his own oneness with Brahman, his aim was to induce this state in others too. He was not interested in good works as such. 'By these philanthropic activities,' he said, 'you are really doing good to yourself. If you can do them disinterestedly, your mind will become pure and you will develop love of God. As soon as you have that love you will realize him.'

Ramakrishna above all had the gift of spontaneity: he had no talent for organization nor did he see himself as the head of



R.E.S.

Eroticism has always had an accepted place in Hindu religion, and many temples contain a lingam, or phallic symbol, while others are covered with frankly erotic carvings. The most notorious of these carvings are those on the walls of the now ruined sun temple on the east coast at Konarak, also known as the Black Pagoda; according to the Moslems it was in earlier times an accursed place where sinister and licentious rites took place

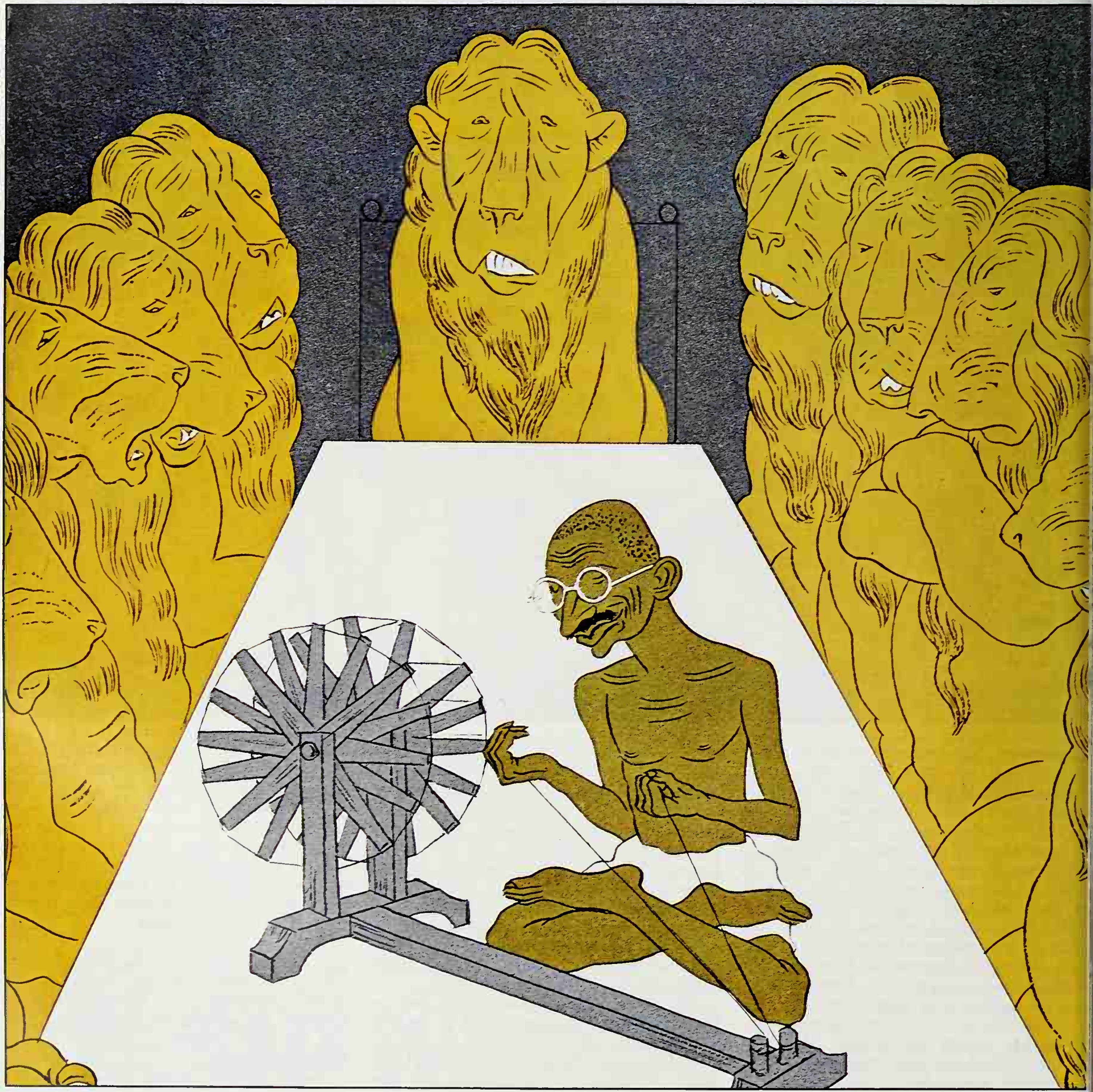
movement. Vivekananda, whom he made is spiritual heir, not only had a most ncisive personality but had also great dministrative gifts. At the first session of he World Parliament of Religions at Chicago in 1893 he spoke of himself as elonging to the 'most ancient order of nonks in the world' and of his own religion s the 'mother of religions'. Although he aid, 'We accept all religions as true,' and lthough he condemned proselytism of any ind, this did not prevent him from founding Ramakrishna centres in America and Europe, many of which have been extremely uccessful; for it is the Ramakrishna Mission vhich has spread the 'gospel' of Hindu nonism ('all things are one') in the West nd which has made such distinguished converts as Aldous Huxley, Gerald Heard and Christopher Isherwood.

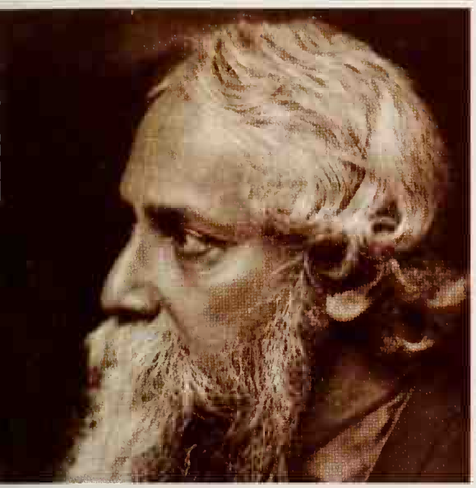
In the West the Ramakrishna Mission has concentrated on disseminating its own inward spirituality, thereby challenging conventional Christianity on its home ground. In India itself, however, it has concentrated on doing in a Hindu spirit what the Christian missions had done before to the shame of Hindu orthodoxy: it has sought to clothe the naked, feed the poor and instruct the ignorant. Both in India and the West it is still very much alive.

The Ramakrishna mission gave back to Hinduism that confidence which in its first confrontation with Christianity it had so grievously lost. There were to follow many other individual propagandists of this new form of Hinduism, men like Rabindranath Tagore, Sri Aurobindo and India's distinguished ex-president Sir Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan, but without any doubt the greatest and the most influential of them all was Mahatma Gandhi.

Seeing himself always as an orthodox

Gandhi did not hesitate to absorb into his own religion what he considered to be best in Christianity and Islam for, like Ramakrishna, he believed that all religions are true





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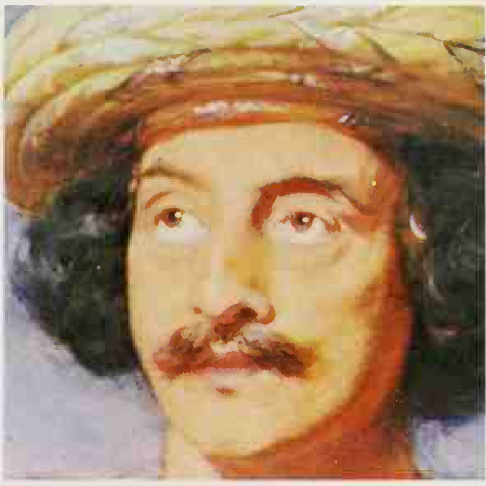

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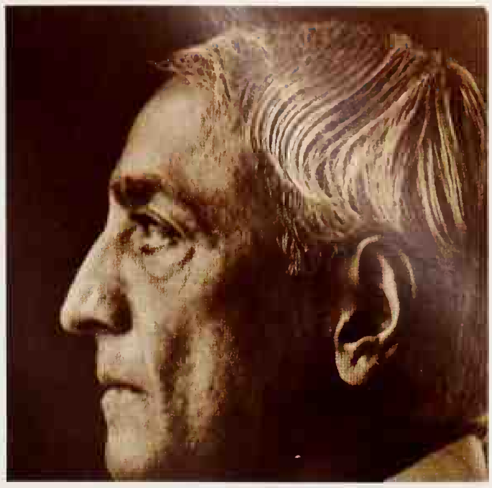

Cecil Beaton

Hindu (for none exceeded him in his everence for the cow) Gandhi nonetheless ttacked orthodoxy in some of its most rmly entrenched positions. Unlike Tagore nd Radhakrishnan he was not primarily nterested in Hindu mysticism, for intelectually he was quite as dependent on the Sermon on the Mount and on Tolstoy as he vas on his own beloved *Bhagavad Gita*. Rather, he was interested in putting into ractice what he conceived to be the true Hindu dharma here on earth. If his own nterpretation of the dharma conflicted with Scripture so much the worse for Scripture.

Acceptance of Untouchables

My belief,' he said, 'in the Hindu Scriptures loes not require me to accept every word nd every verse as divinely inspired . . . I lecline to be bound by any interpretation owever learned it may be, if it is repugnant o reason and common sense.' His God is ot the impersonal Brahman of the hilosophers. God, rather, 'is Truth and Love; God is ethics and morality; God is earlessness; God is the source of Light and Life, and yet he is above and beyond all hese. God is conscience.' God is, in fact, Gandhi's own Inner Light, and the weapons e will choose against evil will therefore e truthfulness, non-violence, courtesy and ove. The supreme evil in Hinduism was, he hought, untouchability, and against this he lirected all his moral force; and so great vas his prestige that for the first time in istory the orthodox were forced to open heir temples to these 'people of God', as Gandhi in his deep compassion named them.

Gandhi saw himself as a Sannyasin and ived as one; but it was not the world that e renounced, but the evil that is endemic n the world – desire, anger, avarice and loth – and it was his fervent desire that ndia should renounce them too, so that she night be liberated not only from the British out also from all the petty egoism that is nseparable from fallen man. He wished to e all things to all men and did not hesitate o absorb into his own religion what he onsidered to be best in Christianity and slam for, like Ramakrishna, he believed hat all religions are true. The resulting usion he offered back to the Indian people s their true dharma, changed it is true, out the eternal dharma still.

Gandhi came not to destroy but to fulfil. Thus despite the Brahmins' defence of untouchability he never attacked the Brahmin priesthood as such, for it was the one cement that held Hinduism together. So too he saw nothing amiss in the veneration of idols or in the near-worship of the cow (see COW), much less in the immemorial rites in home and temple through which Hinduism transmits its own feelings of the Divine to its most humble adherents. The abuses, of which untouchability was by far the worst – 'the ineffaceable blot that Hinduism today carries with it' – had to be done away with; but the core of the Hindu religion and the religious structure that enshrined it had to be maintained. And for Ghandi the core of Hinduism was contained in the first verse of the *Isa Upanishad*:

> All this that we see in this great universe is
> permeated by God.
> Renounce it and enjoy it.
> Do not covet anybody's wealth or possession.

Indeed if Hinduism in all its manifold forms has a single message it is this: since all things are permeated by the Divine, renounce all that prevents you seeing this, renounce all egoism and all sense of separateness, so that you may return to what you have renounced but with a benevolent detachment that will enable you to benefit your neighbour spontaneously, not as self-imposed duty. 'Renounce and then enjoy.'

(See also INDIA; KALI; KRISHNA; MAHATMA; SHIVA; VEDANTA; VISHNU; YOGA.)

R. C. ZAEHNER

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The past century has seen considerable interaction between Hindu and Western ideas *Opposite* British lions baffled by the saintly Gandhi, who sits calmly at his spinning wheel; though a devout Hindu, Gandhi acknowledged his debt to the New Testament *Left* Rabindranath Tagore, poet, author and mystic, and winner of the Nobel prize for literature in 1913, helped to make Indian thought better known in the West *Centre* Ram Mohan Roy, 19th century founder of a Hindu sect which modelled its ritual on Protestant services *Right* Krishnamurti was hailed as a new messiah by Annie Besant; occult movements like the Theosophical Society found much that was congenial in Indian mysticism *Bottom* Maharishi Mahesh Yoga, the guru whose teachings attracted the Beatles

Picturepoint

A number of Hittite myths show a Babylonian origin, while others are paralleled in the legends of the Greeks. But much remains obscure about the religion of this ancient empire

HITTITES

GERMAN EXCAVATIONS since 1907 within the walls of an ancient city on a hillside near the Turkish village of Boghaz Koi in Asia Minor (Anatolia) have revealed the existence of a kingdom which had that city as its capital and which lasted from about 1700 to about 1200 BC. It was called 'the Land of Hatti', its capital was Hattusas, and its people are known as the Hittites, by reason of the undoubted, though remote, connection of the name Hatti with the Hittites, or sons of Heth, mentioned in the Bible. During those five centuries the rulers of Hattusas extended their dominion over peoples speaking languages different from their own. One of these was the Hurrians, whose centre was in upper Mesopotamia and whose name is also reflected in the Bible in the form 'Horites'. Our present knowledge of Hittite and Hurrian religion and mythology is due entirely to the German excavations at Boghaz Koi, which have brought to light thousands of broken clay tablets inscribed in the cuneiform script, once the royal archives of the Hittite kings. The archives of the Hurrians themselves have not been found.

Land of 600 Gods

The Hittite texts present us with a bewildering number of divine names. This is mainly because not only each linguistic area within the Hittite empire, but each individual cult centre, had its own names for its deities, though they might have similar attributes to those in other places. For example, the weather god was Tarhun in Luwian (and probably in Hittite), Taru in Hattic, Teshub in Hurrian; the sun god was Istanu in Hittite, Estan in Hattic, Tiwat in Luwian, Tiyat in Palaic, Shimegi in Hurrian. Some 600 names have actually been counted. The basic type to which a deity belonged is often shown by the word sign with which his name is written, meaning sun god, weather god, moon god and so on. Otherwise it may be deduced from a description of his cult statue or emblem, from his association with other gods of the same type, or from allusions to his sphere of activity in prayers, myths or other texts. But in many cases the texts give no information about the deity's other attributes, so that he or she remains a mere name to us.

The Hittites themselves occasionally recognized an identity, as when we read in a prayer: 'Sun goddess of Arinna, my lady, queen of all countries! In the Land of Hatti thou givest thyself the name 'sun goddess of Arinna', but in the country which thou makest a land of cedars (Syria) thou givest thyself the name Hebat.' But when listing divine witnesses to a treaty with a vassal king they would include not only the sun goddess of Arinna and of Hebat as distinct deities, but also the gods and goddesses of the individual cult centres, even though they might not have distinct names.

The State Cult

The great goddess of Arinna (which has not been located) was exalted as patroness of the state. Her name in Hattic was Wurusemu, but the Hittites appear to have addressed her under the epithet Arinnitti. She is always called a sun goddess, but there are indications that in origin she may have been a deity of the underworld, her solar attributes being secondary. The king and queen were her high priest and priestess, and in this state cult her husband was the weather god of Hatti, a great figure who bestowed kingship, brought victory in war and might represent the nation in its dealings with foreign powers: thus a treaty with Egypt is said to be for the purpose of 'making eternal the relations which the sun god of Egypt and the weather god of Hatti have established for the land of Egypt and the land of Hatti.'

This national weather god is probably the original sky god of the Indo-Europeans, akin to Zeus and Jupiter, brought in by the immigrants who introduced the Indo-European Hittite language into Anatolia in the 3rd millennium BC, and married to the indigenous mother goddess. The weather god of another city, Nerik, was made their son, and they had daughters named Mezzulla and Hulla and a granddaughter, Zintuhi. Among the deities of the state cult must also be numbered the spirits of past kings and queens, who received regular offerings. 'Became a god' is the normal euphemism for 'died' used by the Hittites when referring to kings.

During the later years of the Hittite kingdom the state cult came under strong Hurrian influence. It was at this time that the sun goddess of Arinna and the weather god of Nerik were identified with the Hurrian Hebat and her son Sharruma. Finally, at a holy place near the capital, now named Yazilikaya, a rocky outcrop forming a natural open chamber was adorned with a series of figures in relief representing a national pantheon. The central group is recognizable as the family of the sun goddess, but the names in Hittite 'hieroglyphs' attached to each deity, including the central group, are those of the Hurrian pantheon. It therefore appears that by the end of the Hittite period, in the late 13th century BC, the Hittites had achieved a measure of unity of worship.

The Hittite mythological texts are, on the whole, poorly preserved, and consequently any account of Hittite mythology must necessarily be incomplete. It seems, however, that in Anatolia itself mythology remained on a rather primitive level. The most elaborate myths preserved in the Hittite archives are either of Hurrian origin or are simply Babylonian myths transmitted to the

Procession of priestesses from Carchemish in Upper Syria; Hittite influence remained strong in this area for many centuries, while the influence of Mesopotamia is in turn apparent in Hittite mythology and art

Hittites by the Hurrians. In the latter class though it is legend rather than myth) is the Babylonian *Epic of Gilgamesh*, of which there is even a fragment in the Hurrian language. Even where the gods or heroes in these myths are ostensibly Hurrian, they can often be recognized as ancient Babylonian or Sumerian deities under a garbled 'Hurrianized' name. These tales appear to be recorded simply as works of literature. They are of considerable interest on account of features in them which reappear n Greek mythology.

The myth 'Kingship in Heaven' tells how the kingship was held by a series of gods for periods of nine years. Alalu is defeated by Anu and sent down to the underworld; Anu n turn is mutilated and defeated by Kumarbi, who is apparently overthrown by the weather god Teshub. Anu is the Babylonian sky god; the conception of former generations of defeated gods who were banished to the underworld also derives from Babylonia. But Teshub and Kumarbi are Hurrian gods. The myth closely resembles the *Theogony* of Hesiod, where the sequence Uranus-Cronus-Zeus corresponds to Anu-Kumarbi-Teshub.

A Monster of Stone

The longest mythological poem is entitled Song of Ullikummi'. It has a similar theme and tells of a plot by Kumarbi to replace Teshub as king of the gods by a stone monster named Ullikummi, whom he begets for the purpose.

> Kumarbi takes wisdom into his mind
> and an evil spirit as enemy he raises . . .
> At Cool Pond a great Rock is lying;
> her length is three leagues,
> but her width which she has below is one and
> a half leagues.
> His mind sprang forward,
> he slept with the Rock
> and his manhood flowed into her.

After a considerable gap the Rock bore a child, Ullikummi, who was made of stone. The child was taken to earth and placed on the shoulder of Upelluri, a giant like the Greek Atlas, who supported heaven and earth. Here he grew up in the sea, which only came up to his waist. The sun god saw him and went to report the matter to Teshub, who with his brother Tashmishu gave battle. At first they were unsuccessful and the Stone even came to overshadow Teshub's town Kummiya. Tashmishu reported to Teshub's wife, Hebat, that her husband would have to give up his throne, a message which almost caused her to fall off the roof where she was standing. But Tashmishu and Teshub decided to consult the wise god Ea, who in his turn went first to Enlil and then to the giant Upelluri. Upelluri's reply was as follows:

> When heaven and earth were built on me
> I knew nothing (of it).
> And when they came and cut apart heaven and
> earth with a 'cutter'
> that too I knew not.
> Now something is hurting my right shoulder,
> but I know not who he is, that god.

When Ea heard these words, he had only to turn Upelluri's right shoulder and there was the Stone standing on it. But Upelluri's words had given him an idea. He ordered the 'former gods' in the underworld to produce the ancient tool with which heaven and earth had once been cut apart. With this he severed the Stone from Upelluri and so destroyed its power. Teshub went out to battle again, and though the end of the story is lost, we may be sure he emerged victorious in the end.

This tale too has its parallel in the Greek story of Typhon. The reference to the building of heaven and earth in one piece on the shoulder of a giant and their separation by cutting is the only surviving hint in the Hittite records of a creation myth.

The myths associated with Anatolian – mainly Hattic – deities are much simpler and more primitive. The 'Slaying of the Dragon' is said to have been recited at a great annual festival called *purulli* and is connected with the Hattian city Nerik. The weather god and the dragon god fought together and the weather god was defeated.

According to one version of this particular myth, he then appealed to the other gods for help and the goddess Inaras, moved by his plight, planned a ruse. She invited the dragon to a feast with barrels of every kind of drink. The dragon came with his children and they became so completely drunk that they could not go back to their hole. So the goddess' human assistant was able to tie them up and the weather god came and at last killed the dragon.

Picture Credit

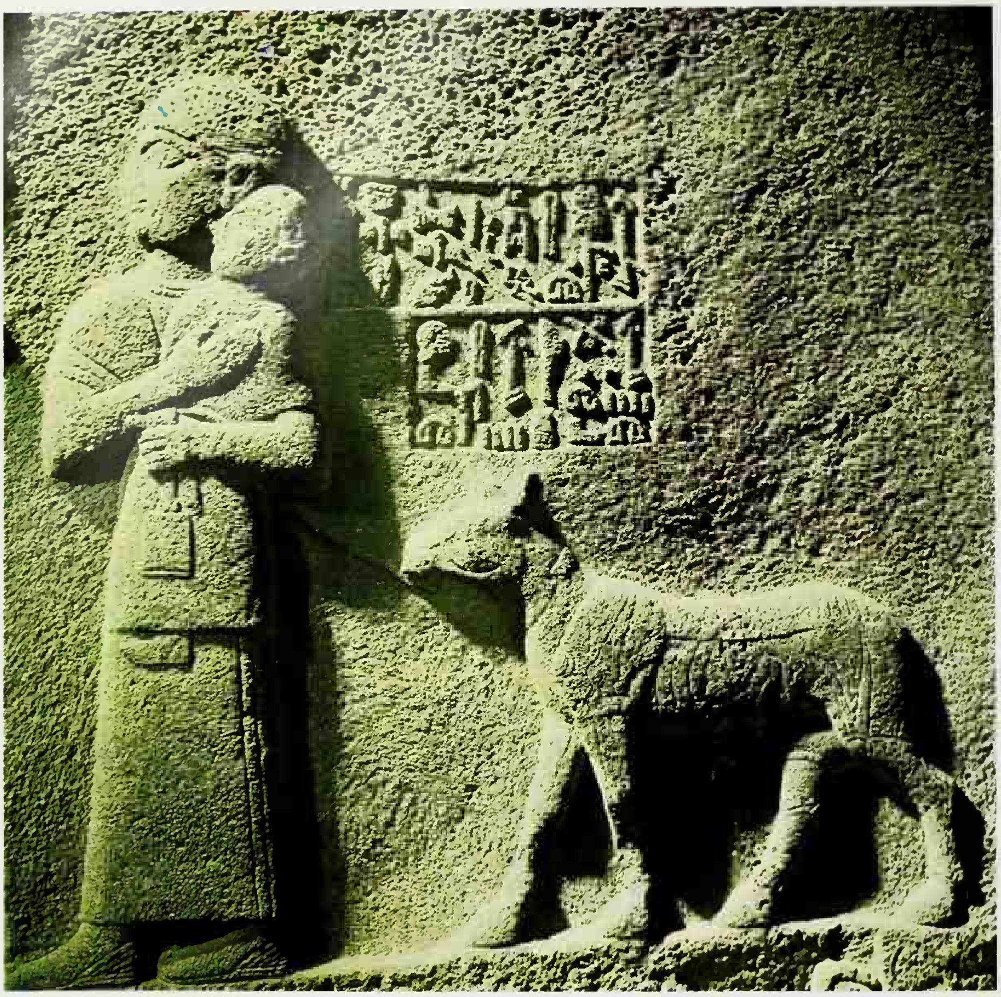
Sonia Halliday

The king and the queen acted as high priest and priestess to the sun goddess of Arinna, patroness of the state, and were both deified after death *Above* Hittite king from Malatya in central Anatolia

According to another version of this myth, when the dragon and the weather god fought, the dragon not only defeated the weather god but incapacitated him by gaining possession of his heart and eyes. The weather god then begot a son by the daughter of a poor man. When this son grew up, he took as bride the daughter of the dragon and his father told him to ask for the stolen organs on entering his bride's home. The demand was instantly met and the weather god, fully restored, went out to battle again. He succeeded in defeating the dragon but his son took the part of the dragon and was killed with him.

Myth of the Missing God

Several myths about Anatolian deities belong to a type which we may call for convenience 'the Myth of the Missing God'. They tell the story of a god who disappears and thereby causes a blight on earth, the search for the missing god, his eventual return and the restoration of health and vigour to the world. In one such myth the weather god withdraws in anger and the search is conducted by the sun god (whose messenger is an eagle), the father of the weather god, his grandfather and his grandmother Hannahanna. In another it is Telipinu, son of the weather god, who is



Sonia Halliday

Left **Wife and child of the king leading an animal from Malatya in Anatolia. Acting as priestess to the sun goddess Arinna must have enhanced the status of the queen. The relief on the wall behind reveals the strong Mesopotamian influence on Hittite culture in its prime**

angry, and the gods who search are the sun god, the weather god and Hannahanna, the grandfather being omitted. In both these versions the missing god is found by a bee sent out by Hannahanna. In another similar story the sun god and Telipunu are missing, not from anger, but because they have been seized by Torpor, a demon who has paralysed all nature.

All these myths are accompanied by a magical ritual, the purpose of which is to attract the god back into his temple and to remove some misfortune which his absence is thought to have caused. They are 'ritual myths', recited to enhance the effect of the ritual. In no case is the ritual connected with the actual seasons. Such magical rituals are, in fact, rather common in the Hittite archives.

Other fragments of mythology are found embedded in rituals. One text tells how the moon fell down from heaven and how the weather god sent storms and wind after him to frighten him. Another describes how an eagle found two goddesses of the underworld in a forest holding spindles and spinning long years for the king – forerunners of the Green *Moirai*, the Roman *Parcae* and the Germanic *Norn* (Fates). The underworld contained, besides the dead, an older generation of defeated gods and some others, such as the Fates just mentioned. Its ruler was a shadowy figure called Lelwanis, whose gender is uncertain and who seems in some way to be identical with the 'sun god of the earth' and even with the sun goddess Arinna in some passages.

The Evil Thing

Magic was a familiar part of ordinary life in Hittite society. Illness or misfortune were assumed to be caused either by a god or by hostile sorcery and specialists in sacred matters – known as 'bird operators' – and priestesses called 'old women' were brought in to try to put things right. Anything from sexual problems to family quarrels, from failure of crops to the infestation of a house by ghosts, could be ascribed to evil magic, which was classified legally as a crime on the level of violent assault.

A typical text describes the procedure used by an 'old woman', who was in effect the local white witch, to cure impotence in men or barrenness in women. The patient dressed in black clothes and stopped his or her ears with black wool. After performing various preliminary rites, the old woman would take the patient's black shirt and tear it from top to bottom, take off the patient's black leggings and remove the black wool from the patient's ears, while saying aloud that, in doing this, she was removing the 'darkness' caused by the 'uncleanness' of the hostile magic, which was the root of the problem. Then the black clothes and wool, and anything else which has been in contact with the patient, were taken away and thrown into a river, so as to get rid of the sorcery for good.

The power of incantation was used similarly to banish evil spirits from a house. A spell for ridding a royal palace of malevolent spirits involves making a little image of a dog out of tallow and then formally telling it that it is a royal guard dog. 'Just as by day you do not allow other men into the courtyard,' it is instructed,' so do not let in the Evil Thing during the night.' Image magic was also used to harm an enemy. A doll was made out of wax or mutton-fat to resemble the enemy and was thrown on the fire to make him shrivel and perish likewise.

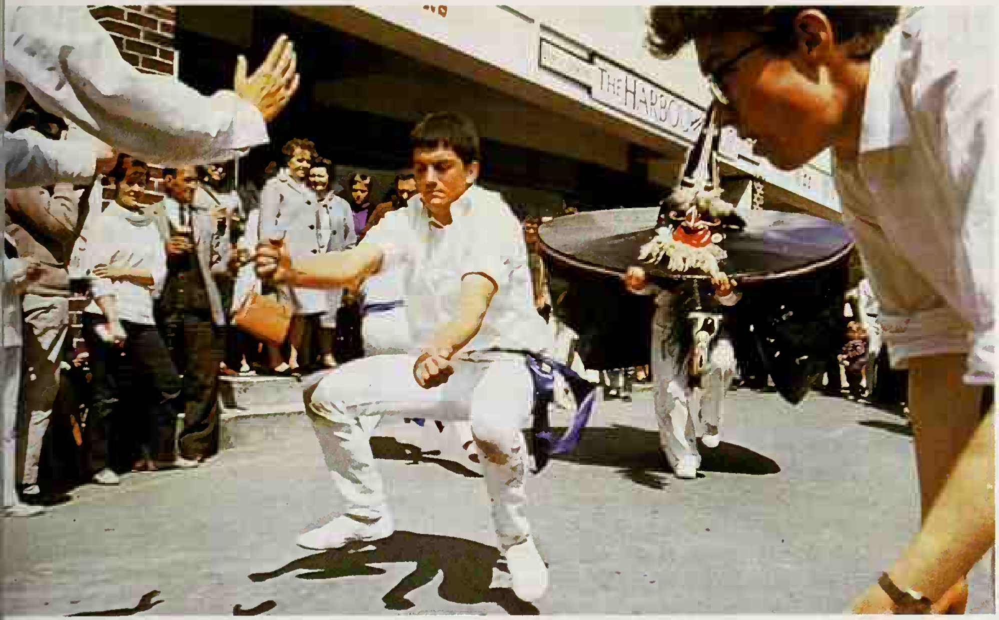
'Come Back Into Thy Temple'

The Hittites regarded their relationhip with the gods as one of servant and master. 'If a servant has anything on his mind,' prays King Mursilis, 'he appeals to his master and his master hears him and takes pity on him and puts right what is troubling him. And if a servant has committed an offence and confesses his guilt before his master, his master may do with him what he pleases; but because he has confessed his guilt before his master, his master's spirit is appeased, and his master will not call that servant to account.' But a well-intentioned master might still also be capricious at times. 'Now if, honoured Telipinu, thou art up in heaven among the gods, or if thou art gone to the sea or to roam in the mountains, or to battle against an enemy country, come back into thy temple.'

A god must be fed, tended, appeased, flattered. His actions, even when attending to his duties, might not always be wise and might entail unforeseen consequences. It would then be the duty of his faithful servant to point this out to him, so that he might correct his mistake. But if misfortune was a punishment for sin, it would not be lifted until the sin had been confessed and expiated. Possible cases of divine anger would be brought to light by questioning the priests or by searching the records. It was then necessary to find out by divination which particular offence was the cause of the present misfortune. 'Now, O gods, whatever sin you see, let the old wives, the seers or the augurs determine it, or let men see it in a dream.' The 'old wives' practised a form of divination by throwing dice; the seers were the experts in the ancient art of haruspicy (telling the future by studying the entrails of sacrificed creatures); the augurs took the omens from the movement of birds. The omens, being either favourable or unfavourable, would give an answer 'yes' or 'no'; in this way, by a lengthy process of elimination, it was possible to discover the offence which required expiation. The records of these questions and answers (the latter in barely intelligible language) are among the longest tablets in the archive.

O.R. GURNEY*

FURTHER READING: C.W.Ceram, *The Secret of the Hittites* (Schocken, 1973); O.R.Gurney, *The Hittites* (Penguin, revised edn 1980); J. Hicks, *The Empire Builders* (Time-Life, 1974); J.G.Macqueen, *The Hittites* (Thames and Hudson, revised edition 1986).



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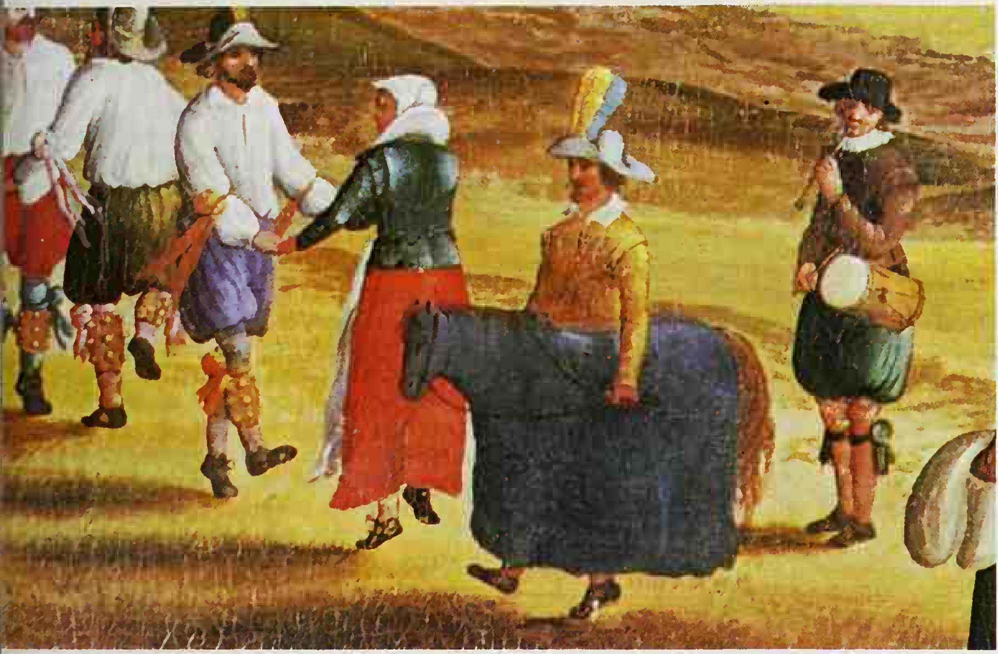
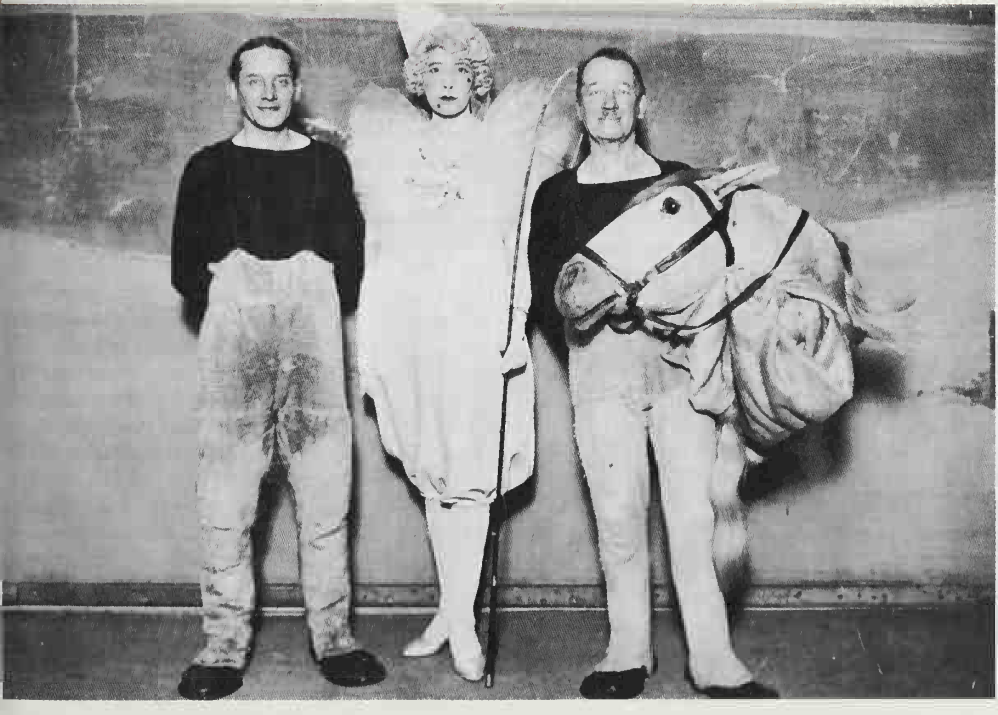


The Syndics of the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge



R. Mander & Joes Mitchenson Theatre Collection

Though 'the filthy practice of dressing up like a horse' was for centuries condemned by the Church, hobby-horses are still to be found from the west of Ireland to Sarawak

HOBBY~HORSE

A PERSON who 'rides his hobby-horse' is one who dwells obsessively on his own special interest. But the original hobby-horse was a man who appeared at certain seasons in the guise of a horse, sometimes in the company of dancers and other characters.

A primitive form of hobby-horse is made from a pole on which is fixed a horse's head, sometimes made of wood but often a real horse skull. This is known as the skull-and-pole type of hobby-horse. The skull is cleaned of flesh by burying it for several months; it is sometimes painted and the bottoms of glass bottles are inserted in the eye sockets. The man carrying the pole is shrouded in a sheet so that the horse seems to be rearing.

The hobby-horse is mentioned again and again in early ecclesiastical and civic prohibitions as appearing at house doors during the Saturnalia and the Calends of January. The skull-and-pole type was frequently accompanied by a stag and a calf made in the same way. The Bishop of Barcelona speaks of a stag-maker in 370 AD; this is the earliest mention of the custom. He was followed by St Augustine (354–430 AD) who forbade the 'filthy practice of dressing up like a horse or a stag'. Through the centuries these pagan animal masks continued to be forbidden.

The Tourney Horse

Some time before the 16th century, when the hobby-horse started to take part in masques and entertainments, he began to appear in the form of a man riding a horse – the tourney horse. It is in this form that he is now usually to be seen at his seasonal outings, although the more primitive skull-and-pole type has by no means died out. This heavy tourney type of horse required all sorts of adjuncts – a sword for the man, a pair of false legs in stirrups or dangling free, and many trappings and decorations.

Great Britain keeps alive some remarkable hobbies, notably the Padstow Old Hoss, which comes out regularly on May Day and attracts crowds of local Cornish folk and visitors from much further afield. He is made of a round frame about five feet wide covered with black tarpaulin, with a smallish horse-head in front and a tail at the back; the effect is more like a round dining-table than a horse. The man wearing the frame has a tall pointed cap, and a strange painted face mask with whiskers and a red tongue hanging from the mouth; that is, the figure

Above **The Padstow Old Hoss, with his round frame covered with black tarpaulin, draws crowds of Cornish folk every May Day** ***Centre*** **The tourney hobby, in the shape of a horse with rider, had made its appearance by the 16th century** ***Below*** **The hobby-horse was well known for foolery and 'horse play' – a tradition continued by the comic horse of pantomime**

riding the horse is a horse as well. Another character, the Teaser, dances backwards directing the Hoss with his curious padded sceptre. Both Teaser and Hoss dance beautifully a series of small rapid steps. The Hoss pursues and catches women and girls under his 'cloak' (his round body) and this is considered a powerful fertility action.

The Minehead Horse, another hobby of the tourney type, is still larger, but oblong. The man wears a tall pointed cap and a metal mask. The horse body has lost its head, but boasts a long rope tail in which niggardly onlookers are wound up. They can be swung off their feet and 'booted', that is, beaten ten times with a boot carried for the purpose, while the blows are counted aloud.

The Cheshire horses appear at All Souls (2 November) after the Soulers have given their mummers' play. The hobby-horse, sometimes called Dicky Tatton or Old Ball, then appears with his Driver or Jockey and is sold. He then shakes himself to bits at the feet of his new owner.

Glass-Eyed Mari Lwyd

The best known skull-and-pole type of hobby-horse, with glass bottle bottoms for eyes and a pair of old gloves for ears, is the Mari Lwyd, the famous horse of South Wales. He is beautifully decked out with ribbon and horse-bells, and appears at midwinter, rearing and plunging in the dark street, while the party accompanying him holds a singing contest with the inhabitants of whichever house they visit. Each side improvises a verse. If the householders give out first they must admit the horse and give refreshments all round. If the Mari Lwyd gang is at a loss first they have to retire and try their luck at another door. Once admitted, the horse teases and nudges the girls and, neighing, pretends to bite them.

The Mari Lwyd is accompanied by a Sergeant, a Merryman who is the fiddler, and a couple now called Punch and Judy who may be recognized as the figures known throughout Europe as the fool and Old Woman. The latter is a man dressed as a woman, carrying a broom. These characters often blacken their faces for a disguise.

This type of Mari Lwyd is known in Glamorganshire and Carmarthenshire and is still being made. Another, very rare, type was made from a square of canvas stuffed with straw, sewn up to form a head and snout; it could be made to move about on a pitchfork stuck into the stuffing.

The Great White Horse of Kerry in Ireland was a skull-and-pole creature eight feet high, the man carrying it being covered with the usual white sheet. He came out at midsummer, chased the women and jumped the midsummer fires. This was a rite in honour of the sun and to promote increase of every useful kind.

Continental Horses

In France the hobby is called *le cheval-jupon*. The most celebrated dancer is the Zamalzain in the Soule province of the French Basque country, who is accompanied by a whole company of dancers, singers and musicians. On the Spanish side of the Pyrenees are other Basque hobby-horses. There is a very primitive one at Lanz in Navarre, connected with a giant; at Pamplona there is a Zaldiko-Maldiko (horse-mule) which lashes out with a fool's bladder; also in Navarre two stuffed hobbies, heavy and difficult to manipulate, are brought out at a local feast. There are many hobbies, 'cavallets' and 'wild mules' in Spain and Portugal which take part in processions, but processing seems to have detracted from their more ancient ritual character.

Belgium has hobbies of all shapes and sizes. Few of these carry out ritual acts, but they frequently accompany processions. A hobby-horse representing Cheval Bayard, a giant horse of legend, carries the four sons of Aymon on his back high above the crowds in various festival processions.

In Switzerland, hobbies recite carnival verses outside houses, loudly whinnying to the girls. The Schimmel, the white horse of Upper Murthal in the Austrian Alps, follows a troop of carnival runners calling in high falsetto voices, whose leader cracks a long Alpine whip. When these bringers-in of spring have run off to their next place of call the Schimmel appears and is put up for sale, as amongst the Souler-Mummers in Cheshire villages. If anyone is foolish enough to buy him, the white horse shakes himself to pieces at his new owner's feet.

On the Slovenian side of the Alps lives Rusa, an inoffensive hobby though his head and neck are covered with porcupine quills. Sometimes he is accompanied by terrifying human maskers of strongly Alpine influence. Like nearly all hobby-horses, Rusa is a seasonal horse: he helps to bring in the spring and must be paid for his services.

In Bohemia hobby-horses are so large that three men hide beneath the cloth, while another rides. In the same region, and around Brno in Moravia, a horse-head carved in wood is carried on a stick at the head of wedding processions. The general name for these heads is the Klibna, said to mean Mare; they tend to be comic rather than frightening. Sometimes accompanied by goat-maskers, they come out during carnival; occasionally they appear on St Nicholas's Day (6 December). They too bring in the spring and fertilize farm stock, not forgetting the women and girls who, screaming, join in the kitchen skirmishes with annual zest.

Poland too owns hobbies round about Cracow; one celebrated one which appears in early summer on Corpus Christi Day in a suburb of that town is said to commemorate a victory over a Tartar invasion. The horse rider is supposed to be dressed as a Tartar. The hobby rushes through the streets and lies down for a few minutes on the steps of the bishop's palace; this may signify a momentary death.

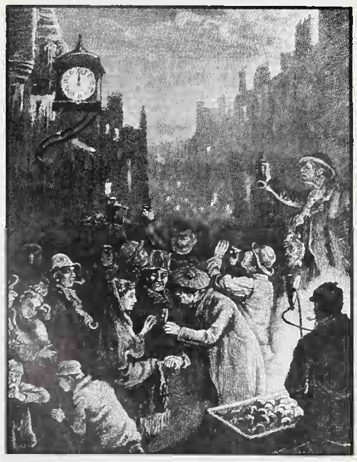
Village Comedy

The hobby-horse is known far beyond Europe, providing an important link in Indo-European tradition. In southern India at Madura, a village comedy is enacted in which a woman – really a man dressed as a woman – is robbed as she sleeps, even to the pillow beneath her head. Two hobby-horses appear, one takes the woman as his own and refuses to let anyone come near her. These horses go to weddings, as in many European regions.

Sometimes musicians give chase to the horse, who at last allows himself to be caught and dances with his captors. Near Mysore, the horse prances on stilts, and halfway through the performance sheds his outer garment and appears as a woman. Yet another hobby makes his own horse's head on the spot, cut out of an areca palm; attendants of the local deity sit on the ground and the horse prances round them, finally falling into a trance. Here the horse ritual has been combined with the local religion.

Beautifully plaited rushes form the hobbies of Sarawak, and the ritual animal-masker is a well-known figure in China.

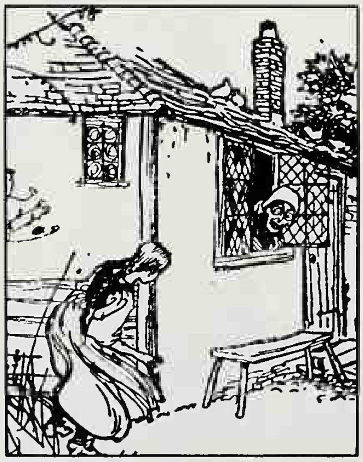
VIOLET ALFORD



Mary Evans Picture Library

Hogmanay

Name for New Year's Eve in Scotland and parts of the north of England; the departure of the old year and birth of the new is celebrated with much feasting and drinking; children go from door to door singing songs and asking for cakes, small gifts and coins; also the occasion for the custom of First Footing.
See FIRST; NEW YEAR.



Holda

Germanic sky goddess, sometimes also a fertility goddess or goddess of the hearth; she was commonly the leader of the Wild Hunt which rode on stormy nights; snow was caused by Holda shaking her feather bed, while rain fell when she washed her veil; in Germanic folklore she became identified with the Queen of the Elves and was also associated with witches, herself appearing as an old, witch-like woman; Grimm's fairy tale *Frau Holle* (an alternative name for Holda) repeats many of the motifs of earlier legend.

HOLINESS MOVEMENT

AFTER CONVERSION, the man who was saved might seek and obtain a second blessing, by which he might be entirely sanctified. This was a doctrine widely current among Protestant evangelicals in the 19th century. The more extreme maintained that sanctification was instantaneous, some of them asserting that after sanctification a man could not sin and was perfect; while the moderates believed that this second blessing, of the Holy Ghost, led to a gradual cleansing of the heart.

Although the Holiness movement is a 19th century phenomenon, and continues to be significant in the 20th, its roots go much further back. As the name suggests, Holiness owed much to Pietism, which laid emphasis on leading an exemplary moral life in conformity to religious commitment and if need be, in dissociation from the world. Pietism had developed among some of the Lutherans, of whom the German Count Zinzendorf (1700-1760), patron and leader of the Herrnhut community of Moravian Brethren, was the most important to the development of Holiness ideas.

Zinzendorf emphasized the doctrine of grace and the encompassing love of God; and it was from the Moravians that John Wesley acquired in the 1730s confirmation of his own teachings about the holy life, and at their hands that he underwent a profound 'heart-experience'. Wesley had had his own Holy Club while at Oxford, and lay societies emphasizing the holy life had existed in England in the late 17th century; but the idea of holiness touched off by a distinct experience and as a second blessing appears to stem from this time. Wesley's theology taught that man could obtain assurance of salvation, and that this condition of assurance was associated with leading a sanctified life that manifested holiness of heart. Although this emphasis on holiness was a central part of Wesley's theology, many Methodists paid less heed to it as time went by. There was always a minority, however, who emphasized Holiness. Particularly in the United States, small groups met, from the 1830s onwards, to seek the experience of sanctification.

A State of Perfection

Another stream of theological thinking in the United States contributed to the Holiness movement. This had Presbyterian origins, but became fully convergent with Methodist Holiness ideas in the sermons of Charles G. Finney. Finney believed that through the power of the Holy Spirit men might reach a state of perfection similar to that of Adam before the fall.

Perfectionist ideas had also arisen independently in various parts of New England, where some of their advocates had preached that, since they were sanctified and could not sin, whatever they did was, by definition, not sin. The irregularities occurring among them and the advocacy of sexual communism by the Perfectionist John Humphrey Noyes, created distrust of Holiness ideas among the general public.

During the 1860s increasing numbers of Methodists met to cultivate Holiness experience and to seek the second blessing. The Methodist churches generally distrusted this development and tension arose between Holiness advocates and other Methodists. The growing appeal of Holiness may be associated with the shift, particularly marked in revivalism, from 'hell fire' preaching to increased emphasis on the love of God, who was now presented less as a punitive Jehovah and more as a benevolent being eager to love all mankind.

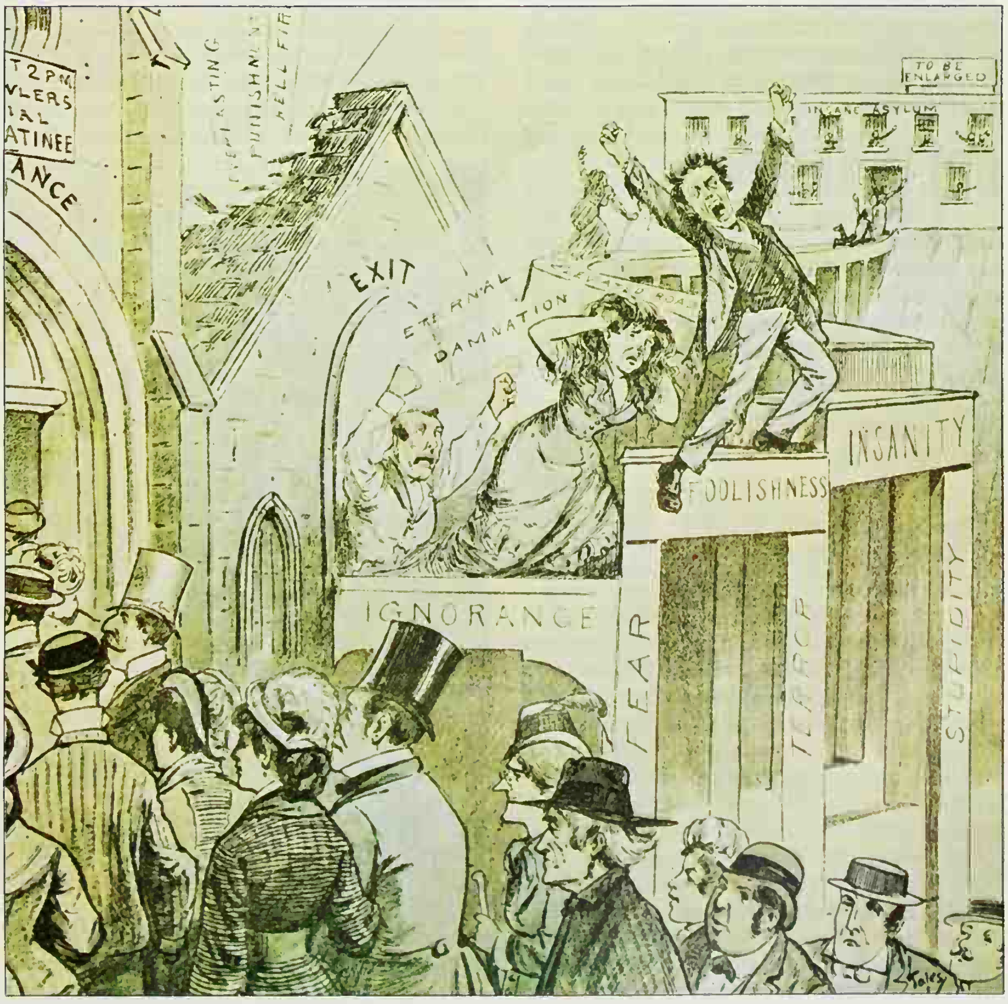
It is important to emphasize that this Holiness belief in the action of the Holy Ghost at the second blessing, and the expectation that 'the fire would fall' and give rise to intense emotional expression, is quite distinct as a theological idea from that which arose in the early 20th century among all those movements known as Pentecostal. Holiness advocates used very similar terminology to that which the Pentecostalists employed later on, and the extreme groups expected manifestations of Holy Ghost power, but their expectations were much less precise than those of the Pentecostalists. Holiness people did not assert that the gifts of the Spirit (as described in 1 Corinthians, chapters 12-14) were in operation in their own times; they did not produce theological justification for speaking in tongues and uttering prophecy, and did not suggest that these phenomena should occur in their church services.

Many Holiness advocates were anxious to remain in their previous church fellowships, and this was generally the position favoured by the revivalists. Most of them were not originally interested in starting new sects, against which their general evangelical position strongly disposed them. In England, many evangelicals in the Church of England and in the Noncomformist denominations were attracted to Holiness ideas, from the second evangelical awakening in 1857, and as a result of campaigns in England by Dwight L. Moody in 1873 and 1883, but most of them continued in their existing denominations.

The Salvation Army

Most important of all the British developments that were influenced by the Holiness movement was the Salvation Army. Its founder, William Booth, had been a Methodist New Connection preacher who struck out on his own. He accepted Holiness ideas and rejoiced when 'the fire fell' at his meetings. Salvationism, however, is a many-sided movement and its development cannot be accounted to Holiness teachings.

In the United States, where many Holiness groups among Methodists were organizing camp meetings and large prayer meetings, church officials grew more and



Chris Barker/Victoria and Albert Museum

Holiness ideas flourished in the periodic religious revivals of the 19th century. Emotional behaviour when 'the fire fell' was easily ridiculed by contemporaries

more hostile to these minorities that professed superior blessing and affected more holy attitudes in everyday life. The more radical groups provoked unfavourable public notice, and their severe attitude to tobacco, jewellery, musical instruments and adornments of dress disturbed the less rigorous rank-and-file Methodists. Equally important was the disregard of Holiness preachers for denominational boundaries, which was a more explicit challenge to ecclesiastical officials.

Church of the Nazarene

When separate and independent sects did emerge, some of them took the title 'Pentecostal', and one of the largest amalgamations, finally effected in 1907, took the name Pentecostal Church of the Nazarene. In 1919, in order to distinguish themselves from the 'tongues movement', as they called the later Pentecostalists, these Holiness believers dropped the word 'Pentecostal' from their title. This body became one of the largest Holiness sects, with thousands of adherents all over the United States, and a small following in Britain.

Holiness sects are numerous in the United States, and there are a number in Britain. Some consist of no more than one local congregation. Some continue to emphasize freedom of worship, and are known as 'Holy Rollers'. Others, such as the Church of the Nazarene, have adopted a more staid evangelical form of worship. Yet others have retreated into an introverted cultivation of Holiness. Some remain vigorously evangelical, but others have adopted a more elitist position, always a possible interpretation of ideas of a second blessing and entire sanctification. Many Holiness groups disdain church organization, regarding Holy Ghost power and the sanctified life as all that men need for life and worship.

Although there has in the past been a very considerable effort in the mission field, in recent years some groups have tended to become inward-looking and are indifferent to the recruitment of what they call, rather dismissively, 'joiners'.

(See also HOLY ROLLERS; PENTECOSTALIST MOVEMENT.)

BRYAN WILSON

HOLLOW EARTH

ONE OF THE ODDEST theories ever advanced about the nature of the universe reverses the normal, commonsense view of the world by maintaining that instead of living on the outside of a sphere, as we suppose, we live on the inside of one. It was advanced by an American medical man named Cyrus Reed Teed (1839-1908), who called himself Koresh and founded the Koreshan Unity Movement to propagate his teachings.

Teed regarded his theory as a revelation from God. A Baptist in his youth, he later dabbled in alternative medicine and alchemy. In 1869, when he was trying to make the Philosophers' Stone, a beautiful woman appeared to him and informed him that he was the Messiah who had been chosen to bring to the world the theory of the hollow earth: that the earth is spherical and that the sun and moon and planets are all inside it. When we look at the night sky, we are not looking out towards the distant edge of the universe, as we imagine, but inwards towards the heart of it.

Teed established himself in Chicago and by 1894 claimed to have 4,000 followers. He founded a settlement for the faithful at Estero in Florida, which he believed would become the capital city of a new Koreshan federation of the world. In reality, there were never more than a couple of hundred settlers at most. Teed taught them that, when he died, he would take them all to heaven with him, and his disciples waited in vain for this translation after his death in 1908. The settlement at Estero lingered on until after the Second World War.

Meanwhile the hollow earth cosmology had been taken to Germany by Peter Bender, an airman in the First World War. The Nazis were attracted by unorthodox cosmology, but even they could not swallow Teed's hollow earth. It was officially denounced as totally unscientific and the unfortunate Bender died in a prison camp.

The praises of the holly and the ivy are sung in many carols. But even in pre-Christian times these plants were valued for their magic power and their ability to keep off evil

HOLLY AND IVY

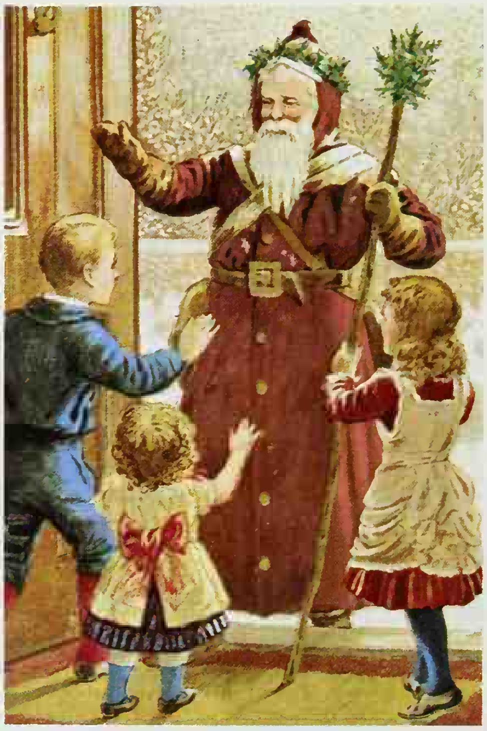
TWO EVERGREEN TREES, the holly and the ivy, are regularly linked together. Both are inseparably associated with Christmas, and everyone knows the carol celebrating:

> The holly and the ivy
> When they are both full grown...

There is also a less well-known one in which it is said:

> Christmastide
> Comes in like a bride,
> With holly and ivy clad.

Ivy is the more ancient plant, mythologically speaking, first of all in connection with the god Dionysus who was born after Zeus had seduced Semele, daughter of Cadmus, King of Thebes. Zeus's wife Hera, in the guise of a nurse, suggested to Semele that she should ask Zeus to unveil himself to her. But when he did, the divine flames consumed her, and would have killed the unborn child but for a sudden growth of ivy. Zeus placed the infant in his own thigh until it was ready for birth. Another version of this legend makes Semele abandon the infant under an ivy bush. *Kissos* or *cissos*, the ancient name for ivy, was supposed to have been Dionysus's earliest name. Kissos in another legend is the name of a nymph who danced with such abandon at a Dionysian feast that she collapsed and died of exhaustion before the god; he, grieving at this untimely death, changed her into ivy.



Mary Evans Picture Library

Holly, associated with Christmas since the time of the Roman Saturnalia, forms a fitting crown and sceptre for Father Christmas himself

Dionysus (also called Bacchus) was often portrayed with an ivy wreath on his head, and the plant is mentioned in many of the legends associated with him. There was a Dionysus ivy in the Attic town of Acharnae. Plutarch records that the Bacchae ate ivy and that the resulting intoxication gave rise to their 'inspired fury' (although ivy was later supposed to diminish drunkenness). If the priests of Jupiter touched ivy this was thought to put them into a prophetic trance.

From its association with Bacchus, god of wine – a source of inspiration – ivy became a suitable plant for a poet's crown; Virgil thought it should be accorded to woodland poets rather than urban ones. Ivy was the recognized wreath-plant for victors in the Isthmian games held at Corinth, and ivy crowns were also presented at a Spartan festival honouring Hyacinthus, a local god. At Greek wedding ceremonies, a wreath of ivy was given by the priest to the newly married couple since – presumably because of its twining propensities – ivy is an ancient symbol of fidelity.

Sign of a Tavern

Again reflecting its association with Bacchus, ivy was used by the Romans to signify a wine shop; it was either trained over a booth, made into a 'tavern-bush' on a wooden frame, or hung in a bushy mass on the tavern door. The custom was introduced into northern Europe and there are allusions to it in later literature. Thomas Nashe, in his comedy *Summer's Last Will and Testament* of 1600, speaks of 'Green ivy bushes at the vintner's doors', and it is from this practice that we get the expression 'good wine needs no bush', meaning that a good commodity needs no advertisement. It occurs at the end of *As You Like It* when Rosalind says, 'If it be true that good wine needs no bush, 'tis true that a good play needs no epilogue.'

Despite these associations with the tavern, ivy has an ancient reputation as a preventer of intoxication. Pliny recommended a brew of ivy berries before a drinking bout, and there are later recipes for vinegar in which ivy berries had been steeped, to be taken before drinking, and a preparation from ivy leaves, to be taken afterwards to prevent a hangover. Cato wrote that one could cure drunkenness by taking wine in which ivy leaves had been steeped – which was its chief appeal to that notoriously puritanical Roman.

In the 17th century, wine was thought to prevent infections if it had stood in an ivy-wood container. More specific folk remedies recommended potions made from the leaves to treat corns, serve as an eye lotion and cure skin rashes and running nose in a cold; powdered ivy berries were recommended against plague and even an ivy wreath to prevent baldness. These suggestions are distinctly curious, because ivy is indisputably poisonous.

Protection against Evil

Holly and ivy were plants of magic power and were used as a protection against evil long before Christmas was celebrated. In Roman times, sacred fire was best started by rubbing together a piece of ivy and one of bay wood. Ivy growing on a house protected it against witchcraft and other evil, and if it withered or fell off this was a sure sign of misfortune to follow; in Wales it was supposed to mean that the house would pass into other hands.

In Scotland small wreaths of ivy, sometimes combined with mountain ash and honeysuckle, placed over the entrance to a byre and under the milk containers, protected the animals and their produce. German cowherds made ivy wreaths for their cattle when they led them out to the spring pastures for the first time that year. In France ivy was often included as one of the protective herbs of St John (see ST JOHN'S WORT).

Holly was likewise protective in ancient times. Pliny describes its value planted near a house, to keep away lightning, spells and evil. He went on to suggest that it had power over animals: if a branch were thrown at any creature it would cause it to lie down and obey the thrower. He also believed it would protect against poison, and that its flowers would freeze water.

Saturnalia Decorations

Holly and ivy presumably first came together as decorations in the Roman Saturnalia, the midwinter festival which the Oxford Dictionary describes as 'a time of general unrestrained merrymaking, extending even to the slaves': it was in fact a celebration of the equality between human beings which was supposed to have existed in the reign of Saturn, a mythical golden age. It was also a time of exchanging presents, and it was customary to decorate rooms with various evergreens. This practice doubtless derived from a very ancient custom of gathering green branches at the winter solstice as part of the magical rites which ensured the rebirth of crops and other vegetation in the spring.

Christian Takeover

When the early Christians decided to celebrate the birth of Christ at midwinter they continued to decorate their houses in this way. As time went on the Saturnalia languished, but the Christians continued to use evergreen decorations at the midwinter festivities, besides keeping up other ancient customs such as the use of mistletoe.

Early Christians may have encouraged the use of holly by calling it Holy Tree, an easy corruption, as an alternative to trying to crush an ancient practice. The word holly, incidentally, derives from Norse *hulfre*, which Chaucer wrote *hulfere*.

Holly was until quite recently used in Italy, with other plants, to deck mangers in commemoration of the infant Jesus's first bed. Ivy, however, with its vinous and pagan links, was frowned upon as a church decoration and was only thought fit to be placed in doorways.

The holly leaf, being normally prickly, could be thought of as repelling enemies: it was thus considered a protection at any time. The red of its berries provided extra protection, and the combination of leaves and berries was especially effective against the Evil Eye. The Christians linked the spiny leaves and red berries with the Crown of Thorns and the drops of blood it caused. It was naturally unlucky to injure holly.

One curious and rather unpleasant custom was still carried out about 150 years ago at Tenby, Pembrokeshire. Men and boys went out 'holly beating' on Boxing Day, which meant striking any girls they met on the arms with holly branches.

Holly Bears the Crown

A pleasanter custom links the holly with 'First Footing', which is still widely carried on in both Scotland and the North of England. First Foot is the ritual good luck bringer: the very first visitor on New Year's Day, he arrives soon after midnight, bringing bread, coal and salt, which symbolize adequate food, warmth and money for the household in the coming year (see FIRST). He also carries an evergreen branch, often a holly, as a token of life. If he does carry a holly bough it has to be male holly: female holly would bring bad luck. Male holly is traditionally, although erroneously, thought to have prickly leaves and 'she-holly' smooth ones.

Ivy is as magical and protective as holly, being used especially to protect farm animals and produce, while holly protects the house. In spite of this, ivy has become subordinate to its partner:

> Of all the trees that are in the wood
> The holly bears the crown.

In a medieval poem this same theme of the pre-eminence of holly over ivy is also referred to:

> Then spake holver [holly] 'I am fresh and jolly;
> I will have the maistry (mastery)
> In lands where we go.'

However, one should certainly include ivy in the Christmas decorations, because it brings luck to women. It was supposed to be unlucky to bring holly, ivy and all other Christmas decorations indoors before Christmas Eve or to discard them before the end of the festivities; to do the latter would be to throw away prosperity and possibly cause a death in the household. Originally Christma greenery was left indoors until Candlemas (2 February), the feast of the Purification of the Virgin Mary and the original end of the Christmas period. Nowadays Twelfth Night (5 January) is the accepted time to throw all midwinter greenery out of the house.

In some districts it is considered desirable to burn the greenery; in others bad luck would follow this. In every case it is unlucky to burn the greenery while it has any life in it, especially the holly. A sprig of holly can be preserved, for it will bring good luck to the house all the year round. It is unlucky to crush a holly berry underfoot or to bring indoors a sprig in flower.

There are a number of minor myths connected with these two plants. Leaves of a she-holly placed under their pillows assisted North country girls and boys to dream of their future consorts. Nine leaves had to be collected at midnight on a Friday and tied with nine knots in a three-cornered handkerchief. The charm would only work if no word was spoken until the following dawn. Holly was also used in the 'witch's chain', made up of holly, juniper and mistletoe berries, linked with acorns and wound around a branch, which was burnt with due ceremony by three unmarried girls. As the last acorn went into the flames each girl, it was said, would see an image of her future husband or, if she was doomed to remain single, a coffin.

Ivy also had its uses in divination. In Oxfordshire, if a girl put an ivy leaf in her pocket, the first man she met would surely wed her even if he was already married. In Scotland the leaf was put into the girl's bosom while she said this verse:

> Ivy, ivy, I love you.
> In my bosom I put you.
> The first young man who speaks to me
> My future husband he shall be.

Fortunes could also be told with ivy. If an ivy leaf, placed in water on New Year's Eve, was still fresh on Twelfth Night the year ahead would be favourable. If black spots formed, illness was certain, its seat depending on the part of the leaf affected; spots all over meant death within the year. In Herefordshire, very similarly, the formation of a coffin-shaped mark on a soaked leaf denoted imminent death. It was lucky to dream of ivy, however, for this foretold happiness. In the language of flowers holly stood for foresight and ivy for fidelity and marriage. A sprig of ivy with tendrils meant 'assiduous to please'.

A.J.HUXLEY

Generally simple people with few emotional outlets, the Holy Rollers make religious meetings the occasion for hysterical outbursts and violent paroxysms of leaping, jerking and rolling on the ground, sometimes for hours at a time

HOLY ROLLERS

NO RELIGIOUS GROUP describe themselves as Holy Rollers. The term has, however, been widely used, certainly since the middle of the last century, to designate religious congregations where emotional display is encouraged and violent physical activity is not only socially approved but taken as evidence of the power of the Holy Ghost. Although such groups are known in Britain, they are much more common, and the term is more widely used, in the United States.

The Holy Rollers belong to the revivalist tradition of the American frontier, where itinerant preachers would call men to redemption by vigorous depictions of hell fire awaiting all those who were not saved. At the camp meetings common in the 18th century in Kentucky, Tennessee and other frontier states, preachers judged their success by the numbers 'slain' for the Lord – caused to drop in a swoon-like state to the ground. Groaning and weeping were common, and various kinds of paroxysm, such as jerking, were well-known; commentators wrote of men, convicted of their state of sin, shrieking, bounding about 'like live fish out of water' or rolling on the ground for hours at a time. These acrobatics, from which the name of Holy Roller is derived, were generally explained as the result of anguish for sinful lives rather than as ecstasy at the prospect of eternal bliss.

Revivalist Origins

The Great Revival in Kentucky at the end of the 18th century gave rise to perhaps the most sustained and widespread outbreak of these phenomena in Western history. Camp meetings were frequent and the revival spread over a wide area, leaving a strong imprint on the style of religion in the Mid-West. Revivalism continued intermittently throughout the 19th century in these areas; it provided both dramatic relief from the rigours of everyday life, and prospects of assurance in a society that gave rise to many hazards and uncertainties. Among a rural, unsophisticated public, lacking both a stable tradition and the example of better educated classes, the excesses of the revivals were to be expected. Various groups operated on the fringe of the early revivals, and may have stimulated their emotionalism: such were the Shakers, whose name derived from their practice of trembling vigorously when seized by the Spirit. The principal preachers in the Kentucky Revival, however, were Methodists and Presbyterians.

The tone of revivalism became more restrained as the 19th century advanced, particularly among the better established denominations. After the 1820s, the Presbyterian revivalist Charles G. Finney discouraged the writhing and rolling that had occurred at his early meetings. The evangelist Dwight L. Moody, who was active in the 1860s and '70s, also disavowed excessive emotionalism.

Outside the orthodox denominations, however, holy rolling continued, particularly in backwoods areas in Kentucky and neighbouring states where the ecstatic revivalist tradition persisted. In recent decades these phenomena have usually occurred in locally-run assemblies that are unattached, or only very loosely attached, to any larger organization. Doctrine is evangelical and fundamentalist, often of a crude variety, and the principal interest is in the shared experience of seeing 'the fire fall', as the onset of emotional and hysterical behaviour has often been termed. Spontaneity in worship is highly prized, but inhibitions are often released in such meetings by the repetition of particular phrases shouted in invocation or praise. 'Jesus', 'Come Lord, come' are typical phrases, but others, such as 'Blood', also occur.

Backwoods Congregations

Holy Roller congregations have been drawn almost exclusively from the poor and uneducated of rural areas, from people whose lives are often emotionally barren except in early childhood and in early motherhood, and whose emotional control is little developed. Women predominate in such meetings, and some accounts suggest that they often outnumber men by two, three or even four to one. The sanctioning circumstance of a meeting called in God's name, which enables the congregation to experience emotions otherwise socially inhibited, and at the same time to enjoy the status of becoming a vessel for the Holy Ghost, or a sinner redeemed by God's love, readily calls forth abandoned behaviour. The force of suggestion and of imitation is evident in such meetings, but there can be no doubt that those engaged do experience sensations that they interpret as a great infusion of power, usually attributed to the Holy Ghost.

In this, some difference will be noted between the interpretation given to rolling at revival meetings, and the justifications that are offered for the bodily exercises encouraged in the Holy Roller assemblies. At revivals, the individual was being convicted of sin, and his behaviour was seen either as a punishment, as a manifestation of mental anguish, or even as the effect of the exorcism of evil from his body. At the meetings of extreme Holy Roller sects, whilst an individual may writhe in anguish at the recollection of sin he is, in such an assembly, theoretically already a saved person. His bodily exertions therefore tend to be regarded as the 'in-filling' of the Holy Spirit, and are interpreted as confirming his redemption, rather than as redemptive. Holy Rollers themselves, however, are not usually sophisticated about doctrinal distinctions, and both interpretations are sometimes current.

Although Holy Roller congregations are

Ronald Sheridan

A vigorous display of holy rolling by American visitors in front of the tomb of Christ in Jerusalem not concerned with formal doctrinal justifications for their behaviour, their thinking was influenced by the Holiness Movement (see HOLINESS MOVEMENT), with its emphasis on the second blessing of sanctification and the accompanying experience of the 'latter rain' (of which mention was found in Joel 2.23 and James 5.7), when it developed in the latter half of the 19th century. Many of the more extreme Holiness preachers were themselves intense believers in Holy Ghost power, and that power was only evident when their congregations made it manifest. They prayed for the 'holy dynamite', and some of them became much more preoccupied with vigorous emotional expression than with the sanctified life and 'heart-cleansing' that were emphasized in more sophisticated Holiness theology.

'Speaking with tongues': under the impact of Pentecostal teaching, which encouraged such emotional behaviour, all forms of holy rolling became more common

Camera Press London

Fire from Heaven

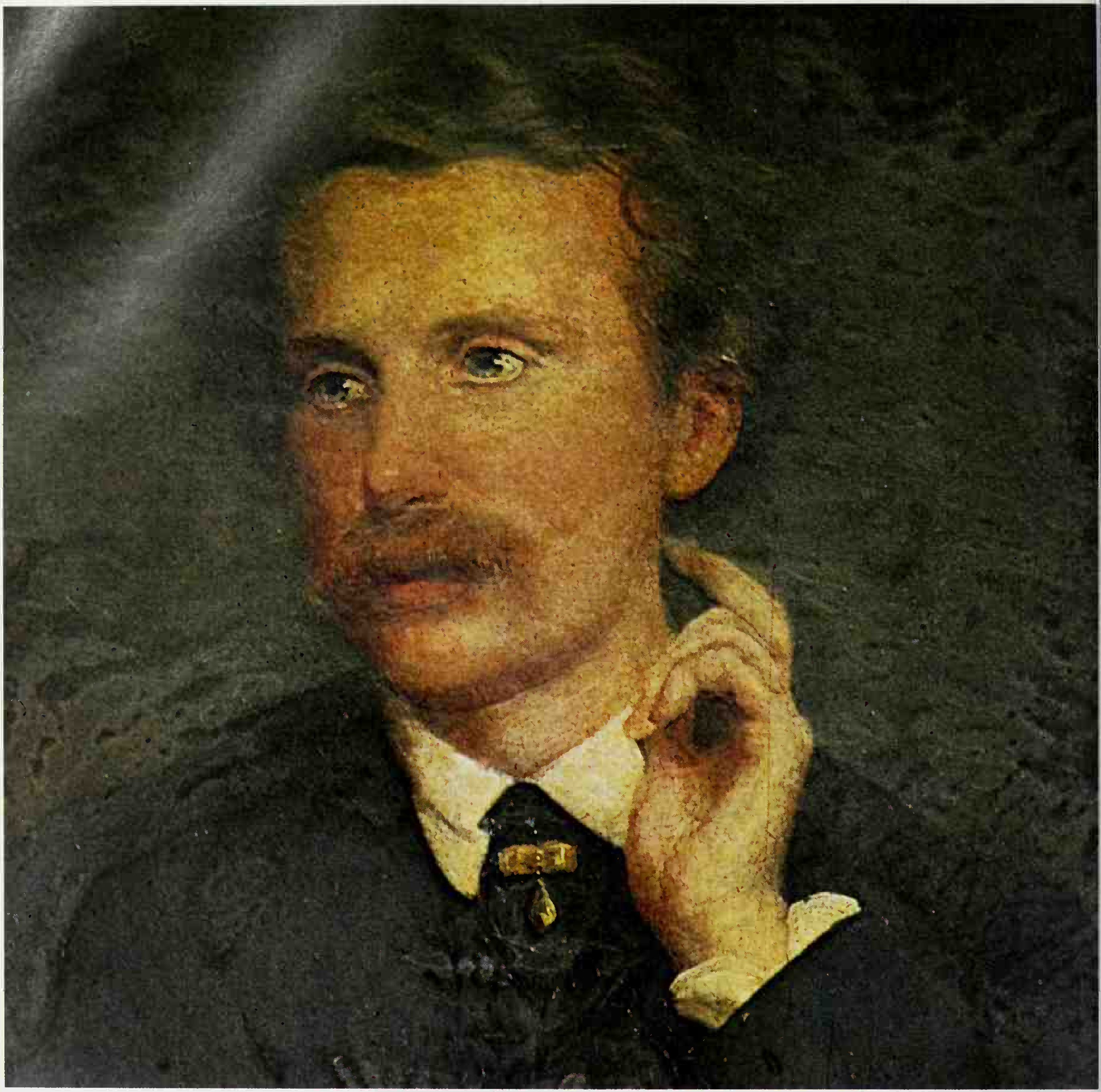
Holiness churches — not all of which were by any means to be identified with the Holy Rollers — became natural contexts for the acceptance of Pentecostal ideas and practices, when these were formulated in the early 20th century (see PENTECOSTAL MOVEMENT). Pentecostalism did more than pray for the 'fire to fall'; it regarded the first experience as a person's 'Holy Ghost baptism', and thereafter, by its teaching of the continued operation of the gifts of the Holy Ghost (speaking in unknown tongues, interpreting tongues, prophecy, discernment of spirits), it provided a continuing justification for highly emotional behaviour at meetings for worship. Men could now be on fire for God and believe that their behaviour was entirely prompted by the Holy Ghost. In the first couple of decades of the 20th century, under the impact of Pentecostal teaching, all forms of holy rolling became more common. In time, as properly organized Pentecostal denominations arose, a pattern of Church order was evolved in which the gifts of the Spirit were given a more defined and circumscribed place, and holy rolling disappeared from the better established churches of the more respectable Pentecostal sects, although it continued, as it does to this day in backwoods areas.

It has been noted that recruits to Holy Roller and other highly emotional sects are frequently people experiencing 'cultural shock'. This may arise in areas where the inhabitants have come to feel their cultural isolation or backwardness in relation to metropolitan centres. Or it may arise among migrants from rural areas experiencing the disturbance of encounter with urban values and the anonymity of urban life. Holy rolling appears, in these cases, to be a spontaneous expression of anxiety and demand for reassurance.

People referred to as Holy Rollers are generally gathered in independent local congregations: centralization has tended to curb emotional behaviour. Many of these local congregations refer to themselves simply as 'Baptist' or 'Holiness' churches, particularly among the poor whites of the southern and border states in the United States, and among American Negroes. Some of these independent groups have slowly become associated with each other, but the emphasis on freedom of worship has prevented the development of powerful central control. Where some co-ordination has been established, titles such as 'The Church of God' have been adopted in an attempt to emphasize the absence of human patterns of organization.

One such group, which arose in Tennessee and North Carolina in the 1890s, was the Church of God (Tomlinson), so named after its first superintendent. This movement fragmented on a number of occasions, and subsequently claimed to be the first established Pentecostal denomination. The movement divided again at the death of its founder, one group following Milton Tomlinson as the Church of God of Prophecy, a sect with a considerable following in the West Indies and among West Indians in Britain; the other followed his brother, Homer Tomlinson, who claimed (perhaps exaggeratedly) 75,000 followers in the 1960s and who, in his later years, crowned himself 'King of All the Nations of Men'. Although the larger Holiness sects have rejected those forms of behaviour common among the groups from which they grew, some of the smaller bodies, which often have bizarre names, maintain the freedom of worship in which holy rolling occurs.

BRYAN WILSON



One of the most celebrated mediums of all time, D. D. Home displayed his gifts before emperors and peers, poets and scientists; despite the closest scrutiny of his demonstrations, he was never discredited

D. D. HOME

On 21 November 1867, the Earl of Dunraven was sitting at a table in the dining-room of his London house. The polished mahogany table was described as very heavy, needing great force to move it at all. Dunraven's son Lord Adare, 24 years of age, was sitting at one end of the table, and a Miss Gallwey was at the other. Dunraven sat at one of the sides; opposite him was Daniel Dunglas Home (pronounced Hume), the famous spiritualist. Home, red-haired, tall, tubercular, was 34 years old and at the height of his fame. Suddenly, in the midst of the conversation (which Home preferred to silence) raps were heard on different parts of the table, a sign that the spirits were present. Then the table vibrated strongly. Dunraven was astounded when it moved a foot in the direction of Adare; then, reversing, it moved towards Miss Gallwey who cried out, 'May I stop it?' Home replied, 'I don't think you can.' 'Yes, I can', said Miss Gallwey, pressing her hands against its edge. But she was mistaken. Her hands fell back and the table leapt a foot towards her. Dunraven saw another, and smaller, table in the room move by itself towards Home.

This was one of the 78 seances of Home's between 1867 and 1869; they were recorded and published in for private circulation in 1870 as *Experiences in Spiritualism with Mr.D. D. Home*.. Dunraven, who died the following year, supplied an introduction.

The most famous seance took place after dinner on 16 December 1868 at Adare's rooms at 5 Buckingham Gate London. The four people present, Lord Adare and Lord Lindsay, Home and Captain Charles Wynne, sat round a table. Home went into a trance and the spirit of Adah Menken, an actress who had died that year, spoke through him. A chair moved from the wall to the table and came to rest between Wynne and Home. Wynne said he felt there was someone in it. Lindsay was certain the chair was occupied by someone. Home got up from the table and began to walk about the room. He was both raised in the air and elongated. He then said, 'Do not be afraid, and on no account leave your places', and went into the passage. Lindsay exclaimed, 'Oh, good heavens! I know what he is going to do; it is too fearful.' Then he told them that Home was going to float out of one window – they were on the third floor – and in at the next. They heard Home enter the next room and open the window. A moment later, Home reappeared, standing outside the window of the room he had left in the ordinary way; he opened the window and re-entered the room. Adare went into the other room to shut the window; to his surprise he found that it was opened only a foot.

He asked Home how he had managed to squeeze himself through. 'Come and see' said Home. They returned to the other room and Home told Adare to open the window as it was before. Adare did so. 'Stand back,' said Home, and went through the window again head first horizontally and rigidly. This time Home returned to the same room, feet first. 'It was so dark,' commented Adare, 'I could not see clearly how he supported himself.' Asked how he had known what Home was going to do, Lindsay replied that the spirit of Adah Menken had whispered into his ear in an unearthly voice. Home, coming out of his trance, said he felt as if he had been in great peril.

Embarrassing Powers

Other manifestations occurred that evening: jets of flame came out of Home's head; all of them heard noises as if a bird was flying about the room; a great wind was both heard and felt as it rushed through the room. Home, falling again into a trance, broke into speech in an unknown tongue. Many years later, in 1924, Lord Adare, now the fourth Earl of Dunraven, allowed his *Experiences in Spiritualism with Mr. D. D. Home* to be republished by the Society for Psychical Research. He added a preface in which he stated that he had not continued the experiments only because he had other things to do and the study of the occult was not uncongenial to him. Further, he had found that, beyond a certain point, there was no progress in the manifestations, the phenomena were all the same, 'designed apparently to prove that some force or forces other than physical, as we understand it, could be made to operate on inanimate objects.' He had seen a lot of Home during 1867-9 and had travelled abroad with him. He said Home was proud of his gift but not happy about it for he could not control it.

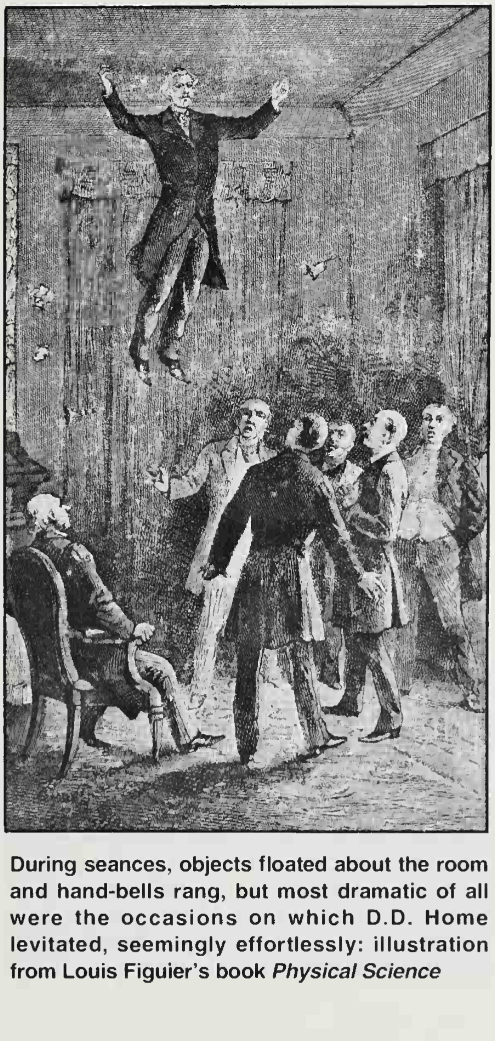
While *Experiences in Spiritualism* was in the press, the celebrated scientist, William Crookes (see CROOKES), became convinced of the genuineness of Home's powers. Once the table round which Crookes, Home and others were sitting with linked hands rose six inches in the air. This stirred them to sing 'For he's a jolly good fellow.' 'After that,' wrote Crookes, 'D. D. Home gave us a sacred piece and before a dozen words were uttered Mr Herne was carried up, floated across the table and dropped with a crash of ornaments at the other end of the room.'

Home's singing appeared to conjure up something elevated; for at the conclusion of 'For he's a jolly good fellow', a very sweet spirit voice remarked 'You should rather praise God.' While they were all holding hands, an accordion was lifted by spirit force above the table; it floated about the room, came within inches of their faces playing exquisite music all the while. On another occasion Crookes recorded having seen Home handling red-hot coals 'as if they had been oranges'.

Bell that Rang Itself

Home was born at Currie, near Edinburgh on 20 March 1833. His father, was apparently an illegitimate son of the tenth Lord Home. At the age of nine, Home was taken to America; at 17 he was competing in the United States with the Fox sisters, Margaret and Katie producing spirit raps which inaugurated the Spiritualist movement. In March 1855, aged 22, he returned to Britain. A seance was arranged in his hotel at which Cox, Home, Lord Brougham and the scientist Sir David Brewster were present. According to Brewster, the table shuddered and 'a tremendous motion ran up all our arms'. Unaccountable rappings were heard all over the table, which rose up when no hand was upon it.

That year, a certain William White took Home to a house in Islington. White described Home as a pale, consumptive-looking young man. When they arrived, they were shown into the dining-room where 12 men were waiting for them, mostly strangers to White. The room was well lit by candles. They all sat round a long dining-table. Home told them to place their hands on the table and talk freely. Within five minutes raps were heard on the table, the walls, the floor. 'Will the spirits kindly rap here?' asked Home. They promptly obliged with a rap or two on the table in front of him; other guests asked for, and received, their raps. A small hand-bell was set on the floor and shortly began tinkling.



Mary Evans Picture Library

During seances, objects floated about the room and hand-bells rang, but most dramatic of all were the occasions on which D.D. Home levitated, seemingly effortlessly: illustration from Louis Figuier's book *Physical Science*

Home asked for an accordion. He placed it on the floor under the table and in a short while it began playing by itself, Home's hands being above the table. Mr White observed that the face of the gentleman opposite him was bathed in sweat. He said that his hand had been grasped in the manner in which his dead father used to grasp it. Then White saw a boy's hand on the breast of the gentlemen opposite, 'as distinctly as if it had been a hand pushed through a door.' Suddenly there was a scream, and a gentleman jumped up from the table. The mystic hand had moved along the table and laid itself on his forehead.

Soon Home was the talk of the town, and carriages began to arrive at his lodgings in Jermyn Street to convey him to the houses of the nobility. The novelist Edward Bulwer Lytton (see LYTTON), entertained him at Knebworth. Home called up the spirit that had influenced him to write his occult novel *Zanoni*. Lytton introduced Home to the poets Robert and Elizabeth Browning and further manifestations followed.

Seance Before an Emperor

Home continued his incredible progress and not even the opinion of Charles Dickens, who called him a scoundrel, stopped him. In 1857 he was demonstrating his powers in the Tuileries before Napoleon III. At his first seance there, Home soon got a table rising from the floor. During the third seance, he materialized a hand which seized a pencil and wrote the one word 'Napoleon'. The Emperor declared it to be Napoleon Bonaparte's veritable signature.

Home did not charge fees for his services although he accepted gifts of jewellery. He was never discredited. The question of how he did it has remained unanswered to this day. The only clue left today is Home's handwriting. If it is possible to control matter magically, that is, to transfer one's psychic force to matter until matter moves, then Home, graphologically considered, was the person to do it. He would not perform for everyone. From time to time he complained that the power had left him, and he was incapable – not the words of a charlatan. He exploited himself ruthlessly; there was nothing to hold him. Those who do not believe in the powers of the psyche but only in the power of matter, unable to find a satisfactory explanation, are driven to dispose of the awkward facts by the hypothesis of mass hallucination or deception.

JOHN SYMONDS

FURTHER READING: I.G. Edmonds, *D.D. Home The Man Who Talked With Ghosts* (Nelson, 1978); D.D. Home, *Some Incidents in My Life* (Universal Books, 1973).

NELSON'S
HOMOEOPATHIC PHARMACY
CHEMISTS

Chris Barker

Homoeopathy is based on the theory that human beings have within themselves a healing force which the physician must stimulate rather than interfere with. Drugs producing the same symptoms as those from which the patient is suffering, are administered in minute doses: Nelson's homoeopathic pharmacy in London

The principle of 'like cures like', which has parallels in magical practice, underlies homoeopathic medicine, in which infinitesimal doses of drugs derived from plants, spider venom, gold and many other natural sources have been found to assist the body to heal itself

HOMOEOPATHY

LIKE MANY BRANCHES of alternative medicine, homoeopathy was introduced, developed and made popular by one man: Samuel Christian Friedrich Hahnemann. Born in 1755 in Meissen in Germany, the son of a decorator of porcelain, he was educated at a provincial school as a charity scholar. As a young man he showed an early talent for languages, and was a school teacher for a while before starting off on a medical career at Leipzig University.

For a couple of years or so he studied in a rather dilatory fashion, moving to Vienna where he met the Austrian physician F.A. Mesmer, who at this time was trying unsuccessfully to establish the validity of his unorthodox theories before the critics of a special commission (see MESMER). One of Hahnemann's biographers tells us that the aspiring young doctor was influenced, to his detriment, by Mesmer's 'transcendental absurdities'. In any case the future father of homoeopathy was clearly at this time at loggerheads with orthodox medicine, which he stated 'knew no treatment except to draw from diseases the injurious materials that are assumed to be their cause. The blood is made to flow mercilessly by bleedings, leeches, cuppings, scarifications, to diminish an assumed plethora which never exists'. Eventually, after working as a translator and a librarian, Hahnemann qualified as a doctor in 1779.

During the next few years, however, the young physician enjoyed little success as a doctor, although he made several attempts to set himself up in practice in various small towns and villages in southern Germany. In 1806, having had, it has been stated, 'less practical experience of acute disease than any physician', he published his pamphlet, *Medicine of Experience*, that was to be the forerunner of all his many subsequent writings on homoeopathy.

Hahnemann was now over 50. Like many contemporaries he deplored the crudities of medicine and surgery as practised in the early days of the 19th century – so much so, we are told, that he formulated his own system of medicine. He came to believe that human beings have within themselves a healing principle, and that the physician's task is to discover and if possible remove the cause of the trouble and at the same time to stimulate rather than to interfere with the body's own vital healing force. To this day, it is a keystone of homoeopathy that the whole patient should be treated and not simply the disease.

Bark and Spider Venom

Exactly what gave Hahnemann the vision to develop the system of medicine which he christened homoeopathy (from the Greek *homios*, like, *pathos*, suffering) remains in doubt. Sir John Weir, the celebrated homoeopathic physician, opined that the idea was sown in his mind when he was translating Cullen's *Treatise of the Materia Medica* on the medical action of Peruvian bark or cinchona, from which quinine is derived. Hahnemann had read of its medical use as a cure for malarial fever and he took a little of this bark himself.

When this had the effect of producing a fever in him Hahnemann immediately came to the conclusion that Peruvian bark both caused fever in a healthy person and cured it in one already suffering from this complaint – and therefore all diseases can be cured from compounds that produce their common symptoms.This principle differed radically from that underlying orthodox or 'allopathic' medicine, which aims to cure diseased action by inducing action of a different kind.

Hahnemann explained his principle, which is basic to all homoeopathic practice, on a rather more metaphysical plane in his *Organon of Rational Healing* (1810). 'Homoeopathy...can easily convince every reflecting person that the diseases of man are not caused by any substance, any acridity, that is to say any disease matter, but that they are solely spirit-like (dynamic) derangements of the spirit-life power (the vital principle), that animates the human body.' Starting from the crude substance or tincture, the remedy is subjected to a process of serial dilution, accompanied by a vigorous shaking, called *succussion*. Hahnemann thought that succussed dilutions of the medicine acquired increased curative power, a process known as potentization. Dilution proceeds at the rate of 99 parts of solvent to one part active ingredient, and this dilution is repeated 3, 6 or 12 or even 30 times, so that these 'high potencies' may not have even one molecule of the original substance present.

According to homoeopathic doctrine, only a single remedy may be prescribed at any given time, because in theory only one drug exactly fits the whole pattern of symptoms, and its action can only be predicted when it is unmixed. The object is to prescribe a 'simílimum', the remedy which most closely matches the patient's symptoms and personality. These symptoms are those which the drug produces in a healthy person, and the appropriate dose is that which will cause the 'vital force' to react against the disease.

Hahnemann, having stated his claims, vigorously set about proving them. This 'proving' was initially carried out by himself and his friends, healthy volunteers who took Hahnemann's medicines in order to reveal their pharmacological qualities. Instead of using drugs in the dosages prescribed by orthodox medicine, he tried them out in incredibly small dilutions until an effective homoeopathic *materia medica* was elaborated. Remedies were gradually derived not only from plants and herbs but from animal and mineral substances such as bee stings, snake and spider venom, gold and even sand; these substances, many of which were poisonous in normal doses, were prepared in a special way to gain maximum efficacy and protect the patient from side-effects. More than 2000 homoeopathic remedies are known, although a much smaller number is in common use.

One of the most difficult things to understand about homoeopathic medicine is, of course, how such minute doses of drugs can have any effect at all upon the human frame. Homoeopathic medicines were 'attenuated' to dilutions of as much as one millionth of a grain in many cases, following Hahnemann's paradoxical discovery that less of a substance could be more effective and that, the more dilute the similar remedy, the more active it was. This did not prevent one eminent critic from saying that the only advantage he could see in the new medical belief was that the whole of its *materia medica* could be carried about in one's waistcoat pocket. Such reactions were typical both of critics in Hahnemann's age and of many modern critics, who cannot accept such a radical approach.

Outcry from the Pharmacists

Nevertheless, homoeopathy flourished, and its motto *similia similibus curantur* (like cures like) spread like wildfire. Of course there was violent and organized opposition both from the medical profession as a whole and from the pharmacists who saw their business in jeopardy. If such minute doses of drugs were all that was necessary to cure disease, what would become of their profits? Eventually, however, it was realized that as the homoeopathic pharmacopoeia, or official drug list, increased in complexity there was ample room for the specialist homoeopathic pharmacist, and so pharmacological opposition gradually decreased.

The new system of medicine was introduced into Britain by Dr Frederick Foster Harvey Quin, in face of almost hysterical medical opposition. The effect of anti-homoeopathic propaganda, however, probably helped to publicize the new faith.

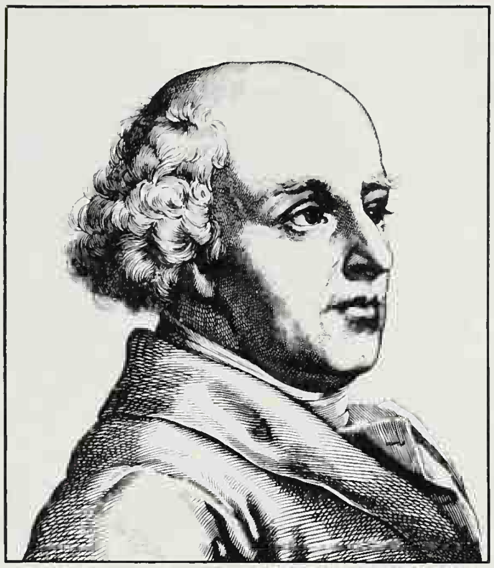
Another advantage was that Dr Quin enjoyed very influential patronage. As the personal physician to the Duchess of Devonshire and to Prince Leopold, uncle of Queen Victoria, he rapidly established homoeopathy's cause within the Royal Household. As a close friend of Dickens and Thackeray, he also influenced literary circles, and at last established Britain's first homoeopathic hospital in London's Golden Square in 1850.

Quin's influence was so great during the middle of the 19th century that he was able to press Parliament to secure an amendment to the Medical Registration Bill, which provided that homoeopathic medicine could be practised by medically qualified practitioners. This was a remarkable achievement in the face of violent opposition, particularly from the Royal College of Physicians.

Medical opinion on homoeopathy had been influenced favourably, in a general sense, by studies made some ten years previously in 1848, when homoeopathic treatment for cholera, then a common disease, was compared with orthodox treatment. To the surprise of many doctors the homoeopathic method appeared to be much more effective. Only a third of the patients died, compared with two thirds treated conventionally. Such a claim only stimulated orthodox practitioners to collect other statistics that would compare orthodoxy with homoeopathy, and it was soon pointed out that in general hospital studies (apart from cholera) orthodox medicine was winning hands down.

Typical was a study made in 1842-3, in which the death rate at Fleischmann's Homoeopathic Hospital in Vienna, which claimed an overall mortality for all diseases treated of 6.26%, was compared with the Edinburgh Infirmary, where the overall mortality was 11.9 %. Although this was an apparent victory for homoeopathy, on closer examination it becomes obvious that at the Vienna hospital a high proportion of the patients admitted had non-fatal complaints, like neuralgia or shingles. At the Edinburgh Infirmary, however, 'very dangerous diseases' were over four times more common.

By now, of course, homoeopathic practice was becoming very much more varied and perhaps less as Hahnemann would have liked to see it – a point made by Sir Benjamin Brodie, an eminent Fellow of the Royal Society and surgeon to King George IV, in a letter written to *Frazer's Magazine*. He complained that 'Hahnemann treats the subjects in one way, Dr Curie in another, and Mr Sharp [another well-known homoeopathist] in another way too.' There seems little doubt that this was true.



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Press Association

Left **Samuel Christian Friedrich Hahnemann, founder of homoeopathy, was an unsuccessful doctor who eked out a meagre living by translating scientific books. When he was over 50 he began to publicize his new theories and he died a millionaire** ***Above*** **Dr Margery Blackie, formerly Physician to the Queen, is one of the many modern doctors in Britain who regularly practise homoeopathy**

The first homoeopathic physician in the US was Dr Hans Burch Gram, who set up an exclusively homoeopathic practice in New York in 1825. Dr Henry Detwiller converted to homoeopathy in 1828 and with Constantine Hering set up the first American homoeopathic academy, in Pennsylvania. In 1848 Hering, later called the father of American homoeopathy, established the Homoeopathic Medical College of Pennyslvania, which is still the main teaching centre today.

In 1900 there were an estimated 15,000 homoeopathic physicians practising in the US (about one sixth of the medical profession). By the late 1970s the numbers were down to around 200 practitioners. Today homoeopathy is formally classified as a subspeciality of internal medicine, and is thus subsumed under allopathic practice. Homoeopathic treatment is not available in many parts of the US.

Medicine of the Elite

Nevertheless, homoeopathy grew in popularity, especially among the elite. In 1841 Dr Harris Dunsford had dedicated a book, 'with permission', to Her Majesty Queen Adelaide, and regaled his readers with stories of the glory of homoeopathic medicine's success among the nobility. It was not until the turn of the century that this branch of medicine began to lose ground in Britain, although Sir John Weir still treated royalty, including Queen Mary and later King George VI. Probably the spectacular successes of 20th-century orthodox medicine partially sealed the fate of the homoeopathic physician, although homoeopathic doctors work today within the British National Health Service. As Brian Inglis points out in his *Fringe Medicine*, the difficulty is to prove that the infinitely small dosage used in homoeopathy actually works.

The pharmacological revolution, which began with the arrival of antibiotics such as penicillin in the 1940s, produced rapid cures for illnesses that had previously killed. This new quick-acting, almost 'press-button', medicine was obviously attractive, and to ordinary people appeared superior, to Hahnemann's minute doses of medicines and vast doses of patience and faith. Although, under the National Health Service Act of 1948, homoeopathic hospitals in the United Kingdom were officially recognized, and in 1950 the Faculty of Homoeopathy Act was passed to enable qualified medical men and women to take a diploma in the 'Knowledge and Practice of Homoeopathy', response has been poor. Perhaps, in insisting that its practitioners qualify in allopathic medicine first, homoeopathy has unwittingly hastened its own decline.

Although orthodox medicine has enjoyed many victories, recently there has been growing evidence of iatrogenic (drug-induced) disease. The side effects of therapeutic doses of some potent chemical drugs can be devastating. Apart from the side-effects of allopathic treatment, there is also the risk of drug addiction, impossible in homoeopathic practice.

Outside Britain and the US, the advantages of homoeopathy are recognized across Europe, and Russian scientists have examined the scientific basis of Hahnemann's theories. How Hahnemann would react to the place of homoeopathy today is impossible to guess. When he died in Paris in 1843, he must have felt that he was an unqualified success, for he was world famous and a millionaire.

ERIC TRIMMER

FURTHER READING: D.M.Borland, *Homeopathy in Practice* (Stc. Mut. Bks., 1980).

The idea of creating a synthetic human being has fascinated dreamers and scientists since antiquity. Now it looks almost possible

HOMUNCULUS

THE MAN-MADE MAN of ancient and medieval alchemy, the homunculus, is the forerunner of the test-tube baby of modern scientific experiment and speculation. The first recorded dream of an artificial man appears in the work of the alchemical writer Zosimus, an Alexandrian Greek of the 3rd or 4th century AD, who describes a vision he had of the transmutation of metals, in which a homunculus changed successively from copper, to silver and then to gold, the process being helped by burning the blood and bones of a dragon. At about the same time, a Christian writer accused the 'arch-heretic and sorcerer' Simon Magus of making an artificial man with an instrument resembling a cupping glass. Here again, the homunculus passed through several stages, the spirit taken from the body of a dead boy being changed successively to air, water, blood and finally flesh. Simon also had the power of changing the homunculus back to air.

It is possible that the medieval alchemists knew something of these ancient traditions. One of the first to have the manufacture of a homunculus attributed to him was Arnold of Villanova (c1238-c1313), a famous alchemist, astrologer and court physician in his own day. If Arnold really did make any experiments in this direction, they may have been linked with his long search for a medicine which would rejuvenate man in body and soul, and with his belief that the aim of alchemy was to transform the natural elements into something more spiritual and more divine.

The most detailed instructions for the manufacture of a homunculus are to be found in the writings of Paracelsus (1493-1541), a life-long student of magic and the supernatural, whose researches led him into anthropology, medicine and alchemy (see PARACELSUS). In his recipe for a homunculus, Paracelsus says that a man's semen must be put into a hermetically-sealed retort, buried in horse manure for 40 days, and 'magnetized'. During this time, it begins to live and move, and at the end of the 40 days it resembles a human form, but is transparent and without a body.

The homunculus must now be fed daily with the *arcanum* (hidden mystery) of human blood, and be maintained at the constant temperature of a mare's womb for a period of 40 weeks, and it will grow into a human child, with all its limbs developed, as normal as any child born of woman, except that it will be much smaller. 'It may be raised and educated like any other child,' Paracelsus adds, 'until it grows older and is able to look after itself.' The secret of how to make the homunculus was known to the ancient philosophers or miracle men, some of whom were themselves said to have been begotten by the process, but this is 'one of the greatest secrets, and will remain a secret until the end of days, when everything will be made known.'

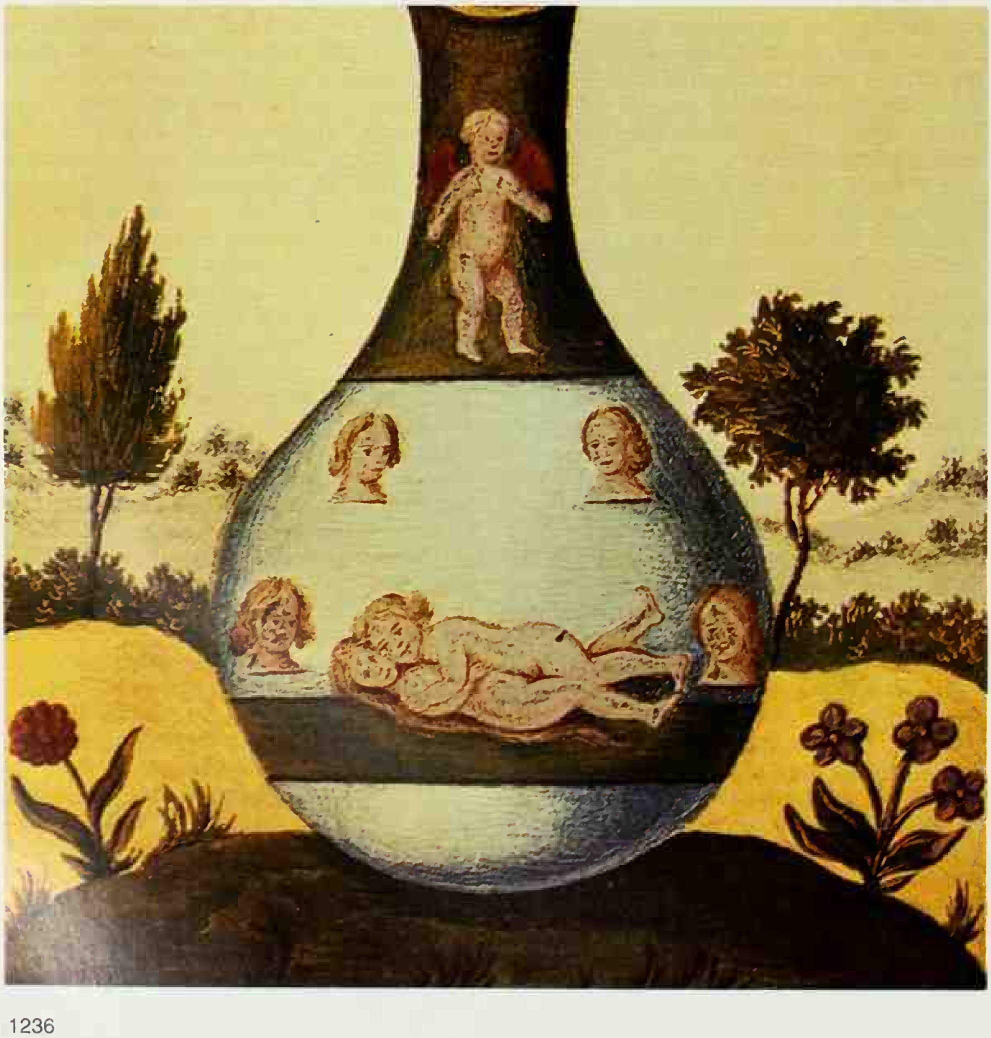
It is likely that it was not mere morbid curiosity which prompted these experiments of Paracelsus, as the semen and blood mentioned were regarded as carriers of the *pneuma* or soul-substance, and as such represented the *materia prima*, or elemental matter of which, in alchemical theory, all substances were ultimately composed.

Similar experiments were reported by one of Louis XIV's physicians, Borel, who also conjured a human form, which emitted bloody rays of light, from distilled blood. The physician and mystical philosopher Robert Fludd (see FLUDD) also distilled blood, and claimed to have removed a human head, complete with face, eyes, nose and hair, from the retort after he had heard a frightful noise coming from it.

A story which, through various film versions, has become known to a wide public is Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley's *Frankenstein* (1818), 'an adolescent's version of the eternal story of Man's attempt to create human life' (as Richard Church characterizes the novel). This owed its immediate inspiration to a conversation between the poets Byron and Shelley about the experiments of Dr Erasmus Darwin (grandfather of the author of *The Origin of Species*). Darwin had preserved a piece of vermicelli in a glass case until it began to move of its own accord. 'Perhaps,' wrote Mary Shelley in the introduction to her story, 'a corpse would be re-animated ... perhaps the component parts of a creature might be manufactured, brought together and endued with vital warmth.' The Dr Frankenstein of the story developed his own interest in natural science through his reading of Paracelsus and other alchemists.

In 1873, Dr Emil Besetzny published an elaborate account of ten homunculi generated in bottles by a certain John Ferdinand, Count of Kufstein in the Tyrol, in 1775, with the aid of an Italian mystic and Rosicrucian, the Abbé Geloni. This account purported to be based on a collection of Masonic manuscripts and on the diary of the Count's butler. Whether stories of this sort were circulating in Europe at the time Mary Shelley wrote her Gothic novel (in Switzerland) and whether she also heard them cannot be known for certain, but it seems not unlikely.

The homunculus belonged, by the beginning of the 19th century, to a double tradition: the literary one partly based on folktales and the pseudoscientific one based on alchemy. In our own time, these two strands are represented by science fiction and horror films on the one hand, and test-tube fertilization and genetic experimentation on the other. The homunculus, it seems, has a future even more interesting than its curious past.



Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal, Paris

In alchemy, the union of two bodies represents the first stage of the Great Work, in which the solid is dissolved by the volatile spirit. The couple then pass through death and corruption to form a perfect child: from a 17th-century MS attributed to Georges Anrach

The golden honeycomb made by Daedalus the legendary craftsman for the Temple of Aphrodite has been copied by the artist Michael Ayrton – complete with live bees

Daily Telegraph Colour Library

The period immediately after marriage is still known as the honeymoon, an indication of the ancient association with fruitfulness of this first sweetener known to man, which also figures in magical and witchcraft practices

HONEY

AS A FEATURE of human experience, honey is as old as language, perhaps even older. The Chinese, Sanskrit and ancient Greek words for it have a common root from which the English word mead also derives, and one of the earliest paintings in existence, a rock painting from a cave near Valencia in Spain, shows men gathering honey in a basket.

For many thousands of years, honey was the only sweetener known to man, and it was also the first means of making an intoxicating drink. It is no wonder, therefore, that the ancient Babylonians swore solemnly by the honey god, or that in the *Rig-Veda* honey and *soma* drip from the fig tree that represents the universe.

In the belief of more than one ancient people, honey is abundant in holy or divine places: in the book of Exodus, the God of Abraham promises the elders of Israel that he will bring them to a land flowing with milk and honey. In Jewish tradition, the Messiah feeds the pious in heaven with honey and manna, and in a number of medieval mystical prayers, Christ himself is addressed as the honeycomb.

In keeping with its sacred character, honey was poured in offerings and libations, and in many places played a part in rites connected with birth, marriage and death. In Babylonia, honey was frequently offered to the gods Marduk and Ishtar in order to secure their help against witchcraft, and the fact that burnt offerings of honey are specifically forbidden in the Old Testament (Leviticus 2. 11) shows that the custom must have been prevalent at some time among the ancient Hebrews. Indeed, the association of honey with a sacred offering lingered on into early medieval times. The Synod of Auxerre (585 AD) expressly forbade the consecration of wine mixed with honey, and a Synod of 692, the offering of milk and honey at the altar.

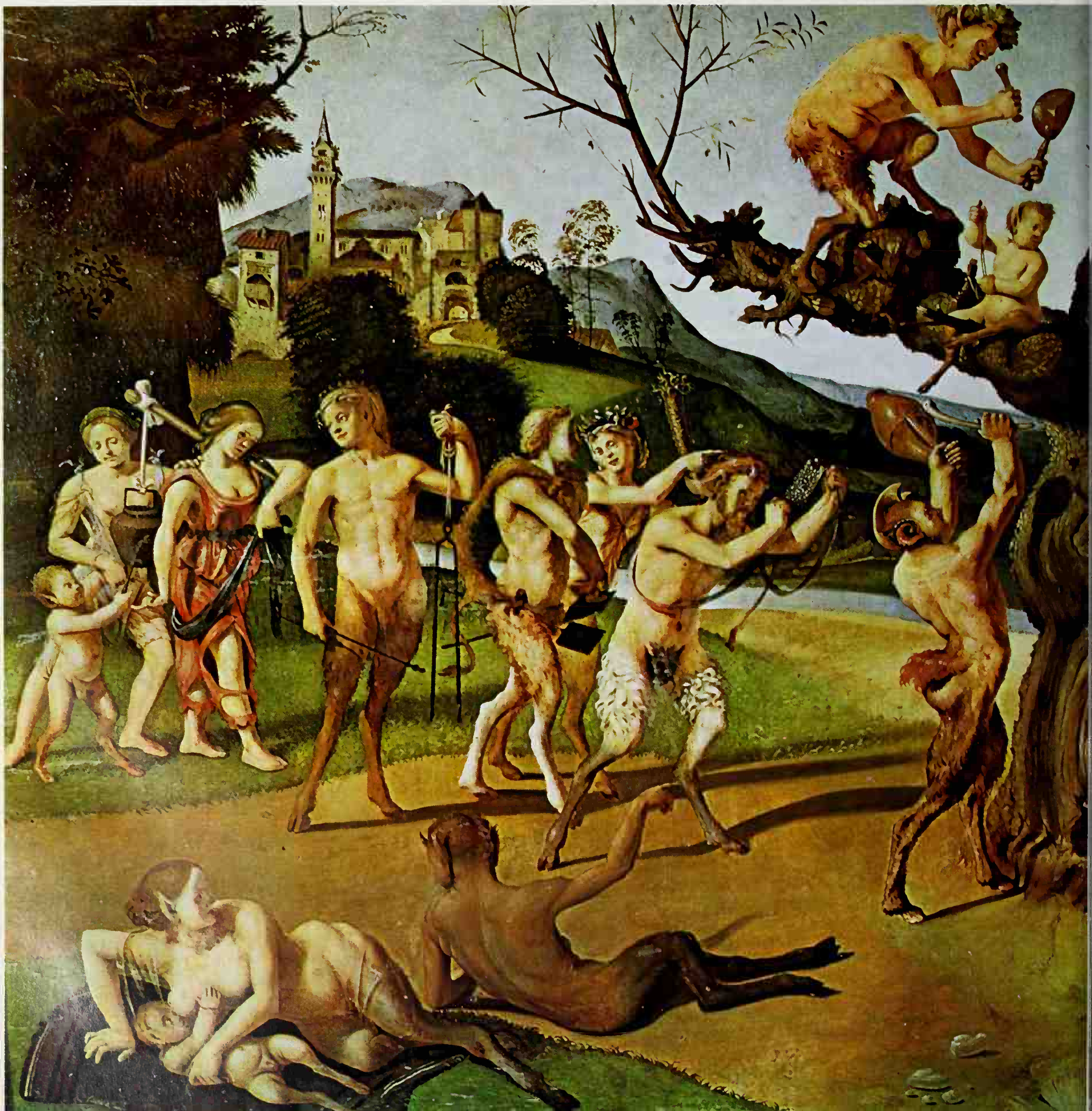
According to a manual of ancient Vedic law, a newly-born boy is to be fed with honey and butter, and his lips touched with a golden spoon; and Isaiah comforts King Ahaz with the sign of the child Immanuel, to be born of a virgin, who shall eat butter and honey, 'that he may know to refuse evil and choose the good.' In Greek mythology, the infant Zeus is hidden by his mother Rhea, in a cave on Mount Dicte, which is full of sacred bees, and fed on honey and goat's milk.

Symbol of Fruitfulness

In some parts of India, honey is still given to the bridegroom on his wedding day, a survival from the ancient custom of offering honey at the wedding sacrifice, chiefly to propitiate evil spirits. In Croatia it was the custom to smear the threshold with honey as the bride entered the groom's house, and to give the bride a jar of honey, and similar customs have been observed elsewhere. In southern Germany, beehives were at one time festively decorated at a wedding, so that bees and men could rejoice together.

In his account of the life of the Thonga, a South African tribe, Henri Junod reports that during the betrothal a suitor was not allowed to eat honey on his first visit to his girl's parents, 'because honey slips away like a fish, and the girl might also slip through his hands.' When the man is married, he must refrain from eating honey with his wife for a year, until she has given birth. He may eat it in the bush, but must not leave any traces of it on his hands, in case his wife notices, and runs home. The origin of this taboo is obscure, though it may be related to the beliefs about honey's magic powers at weddings – and on honeymoons – in other parts of the world.

Honey is a widespread symbol of fruitfulness in love and marriage, and has a long history even as an aphrodisiac. The ancient Greek doctor Hippocrates, the 'father of medicine', recommended ass's meat and milk with honey as an aphrodisiac, and honey was a favourite food for this purpose in the harems of imperial Istanbul. It was also used in the love potions of the southern Slavs, and in other parts of Europe mixed in cakes intended to be eaten by the boy or girl whose love one hoped to win. It is reported that the Magyars used to smear the sexual organs

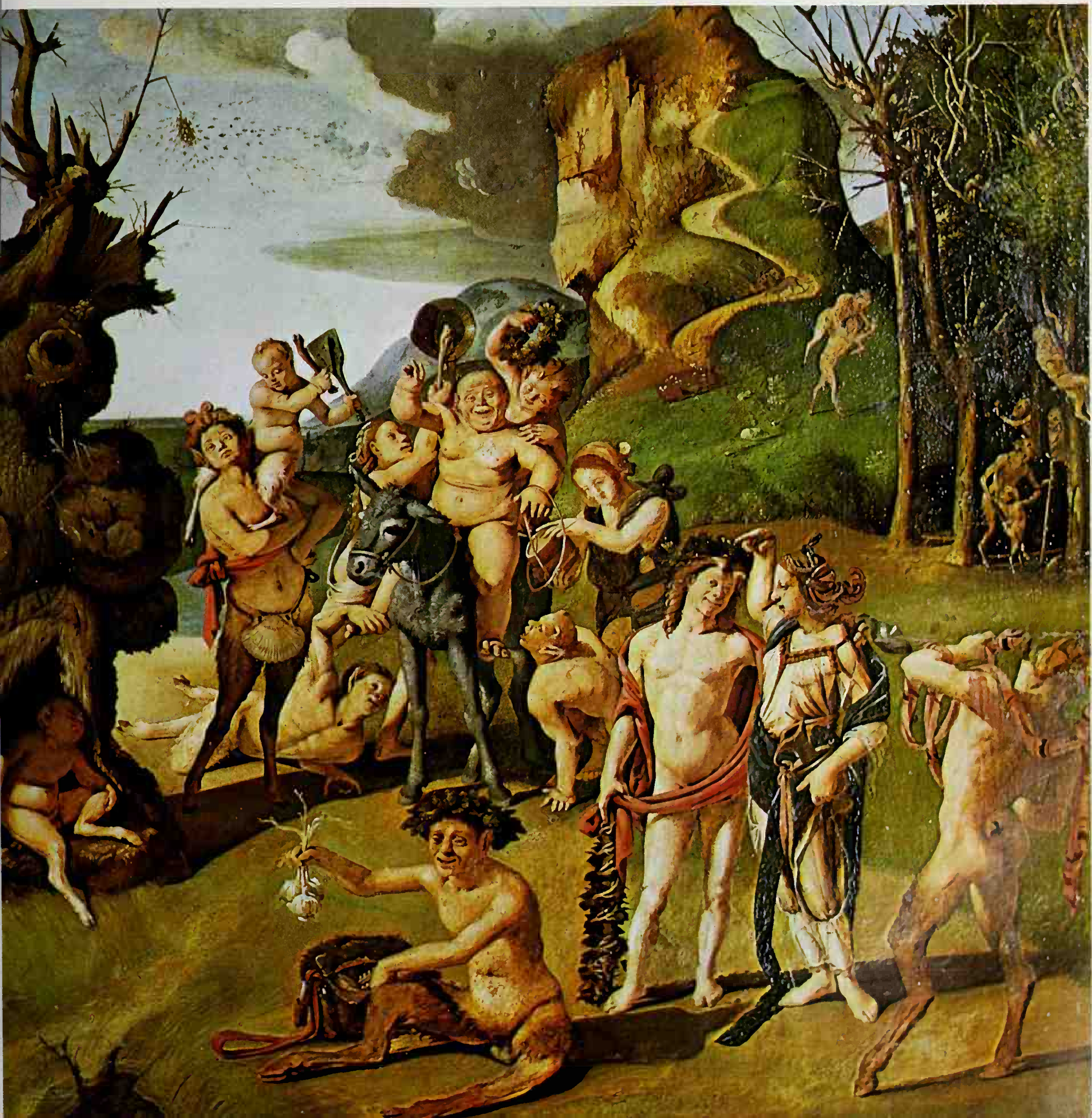


of young girls and boys with honey, to ensure their greater popularity with the opposite sex, and in some parts of the Balkans it was the custom to smear the bride or the groom's face with honey.

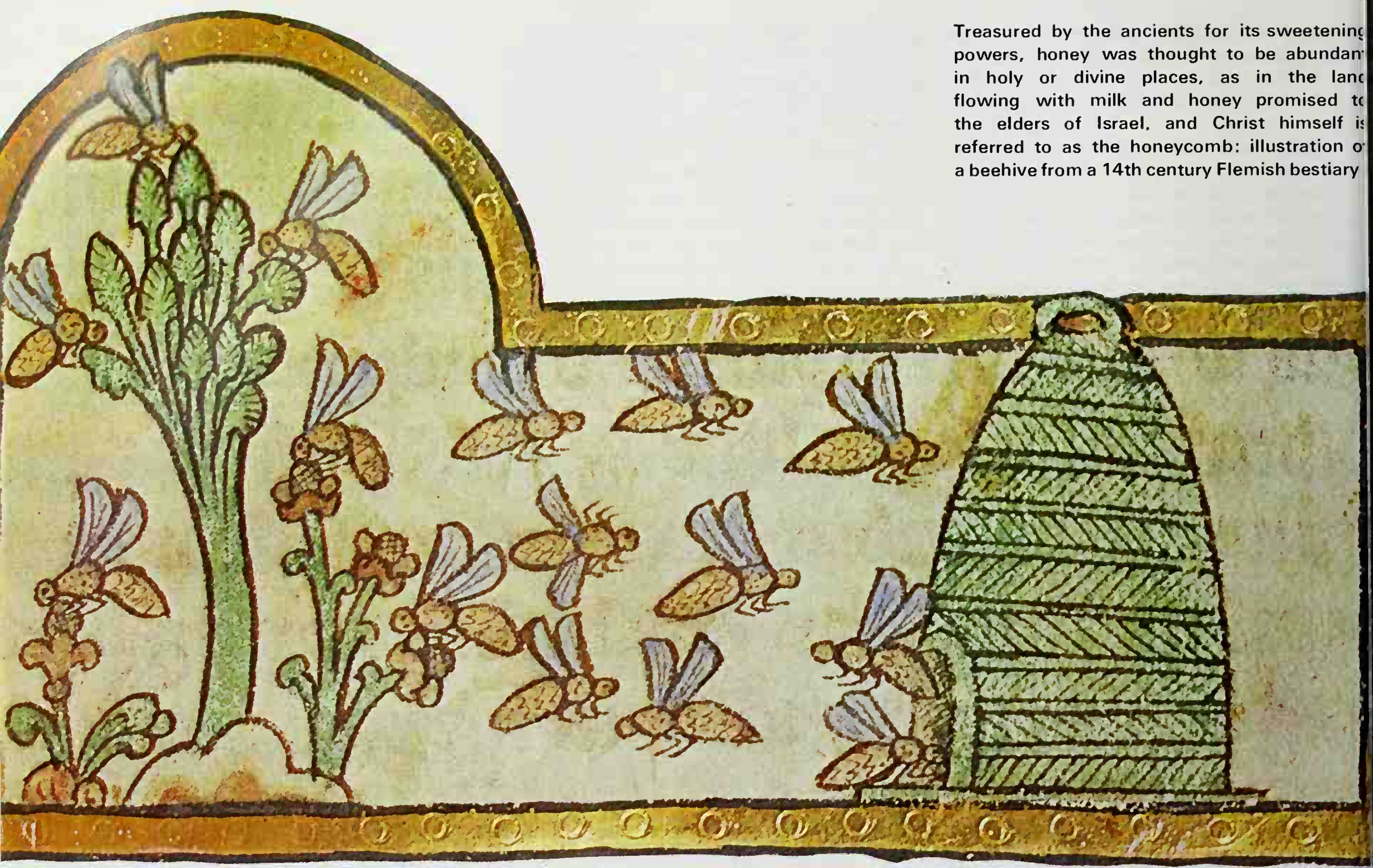
Though less common than the association with birth and marriage, there is also a connection in some religious rites between honey and death. In the great Vedic funeral hymn, the priests are commanded to pour an offering of honey to Yama, the god of death, and in another ancient Indian ritual, the bones of the dead were placed in an urn filled with curds and honey. Corpses were sometimes cleaned with honey, or, in ancient Egypt, preserved in it. At the funeral of Patroclus, the friend of Achilles, in the *Iliad*, oil and honey were placed in jars near the pyre, the intention, being perhaps that a man might enjoy in the next world what had given him pleasure in this. In the same way, it was once the custom in Russia to place a cup of honey by the corpse at a funeral, or to reserve a honey cake for the dead person at the funeral feast. This custom may also have derived from the very ancient belief that honey was effective in keeping malignant spirits at bay.

In fact, the offering of honey to the spirits of the dead appears to be one of the oldest of all cults, and mead was sometimes poured into the ground for the departed man to drink. Although the custom must be thousands of years old, its earliest mention in literature is probably in the *Odyssey,* where the witch Circe tells Odysseus to dig a trench and pour mead, wine and water into it, in order to call up the spirit of the blind seer Teiresias.

From its use in these libations to the dead, honey came to be used also in magic. In Silesia, it was used in the preparation of a magic decoy fox used by huntsmen: the honey in this case had to be found at midnight and carried over three boundaries between properties. Honey is mentioned in the records of a witches' trial in Switzerland in 1499, as an instrument of black magic which afflicted whomsoever tasted it with the death



For many thousands of years, honey was the only sweetener known to man, and it was also the first means of making an intoxicating drink: *The Discovery of Honey,* a painting by Piero di Cosimo, late 15th century



Treasured by the ancients for its sweetenin powers, honey was thought to be abundan in holy or divine places, as in the lan flowing with milk and honey promised t the elders of Israel, and Christ himself i referred to as the honeycomb: illustration o a beehive from a 14th century Flemish bestiary

British Museum

agony. Witches were also supposed to be able to steal honey by magic means, as they could milk, and three years' severe penance were imposed on offenders. It was also debated in the Middle Ages whether it was right to eat honey from bees which had stung a man to death. Conversely, it was believed in some parts of Southern and Central Europe, that honey must not be given to anyone who was suffering from a serious illness as this would cause the bees to die.

More frequently, however, honey was revered for its healing properties. Sick people were exorcized in the name of honey in ancient Babylonia, and the custom of offering milk and honey to the demons of disease lingered on, for example in the Balkans, until comparatively recent times. Honey does, in fact, have antiseptic properties, and its quality of being rapidly digestible makes it an ideal source of energy, not only to invalids, but to healthy people as well. These properties were recognized in very ancient times, and in the Egyptian medical papyri, in particular, honey frequently figures in prescriptions. The so-called virgin honey (the first pure honey drained from the comb without heat or pressure) has always been especially valued for its medicinal powers, particularly as an ophthalmic remedy.

So strong is the appeal of honey to the imagination of unsophisticated folk, that even dreams of honey are invested with a peculiar significance. To dream of honey is a sign of unexpectedly overcoming a difficulty, and it also promises cleverness, because the bees have been so clever in making it. If a king dreams of breaking a honeycomb and eating from it, it means his people will bring him happiness and wealth, but if an ordinary man dreams that he has been given honey when he did not have any, it means he will lose his wealth. In the Indian *Book of Dreams*, to dream of eating honey is a bad omen, and there are superstitious beliefs that show a dread of honey recorded from several places—for example, that it is fatal to eat honey without getting the mouth and hands smeared. But these beliefs about the harm honey may portend are no more than the reverse side of the universal love of and reverence for honey on the part of a mankind ever grateful to the substance that first sweetened earthly life.

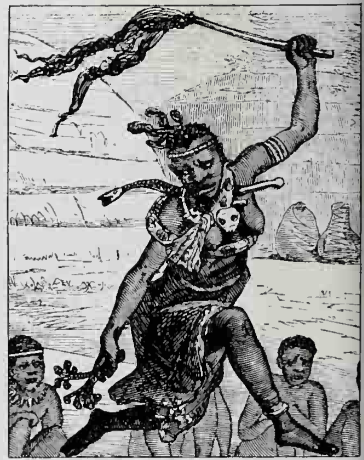
Hood

A covering for the head, consequently a symbol of being apart from the everyday world; a cowl is the hood worn by some orders of monks: a hood which completely envelops the head, and so masks the individual personality of the wearer, may be a symbol of penitence (see CHRISTIANITY; EASTER); or it may be intended to terrify, like the hoods of the Ku Klux Klan.

Transworld Feature Syndicate

Hoodoo

A form of popular magic practised by the Negroes of the southern United States; it has many features in common with Voodoo as found in Haiti, and both are thought to have been imported by Dahomey slaves from West Africa: magic charms known as hoodoo hands are variously used to bring the wearer good luck, or, directed against an enemy, to cause sickness, ruin, and even death: in modern American usage, hoodoo signifies bad luck.



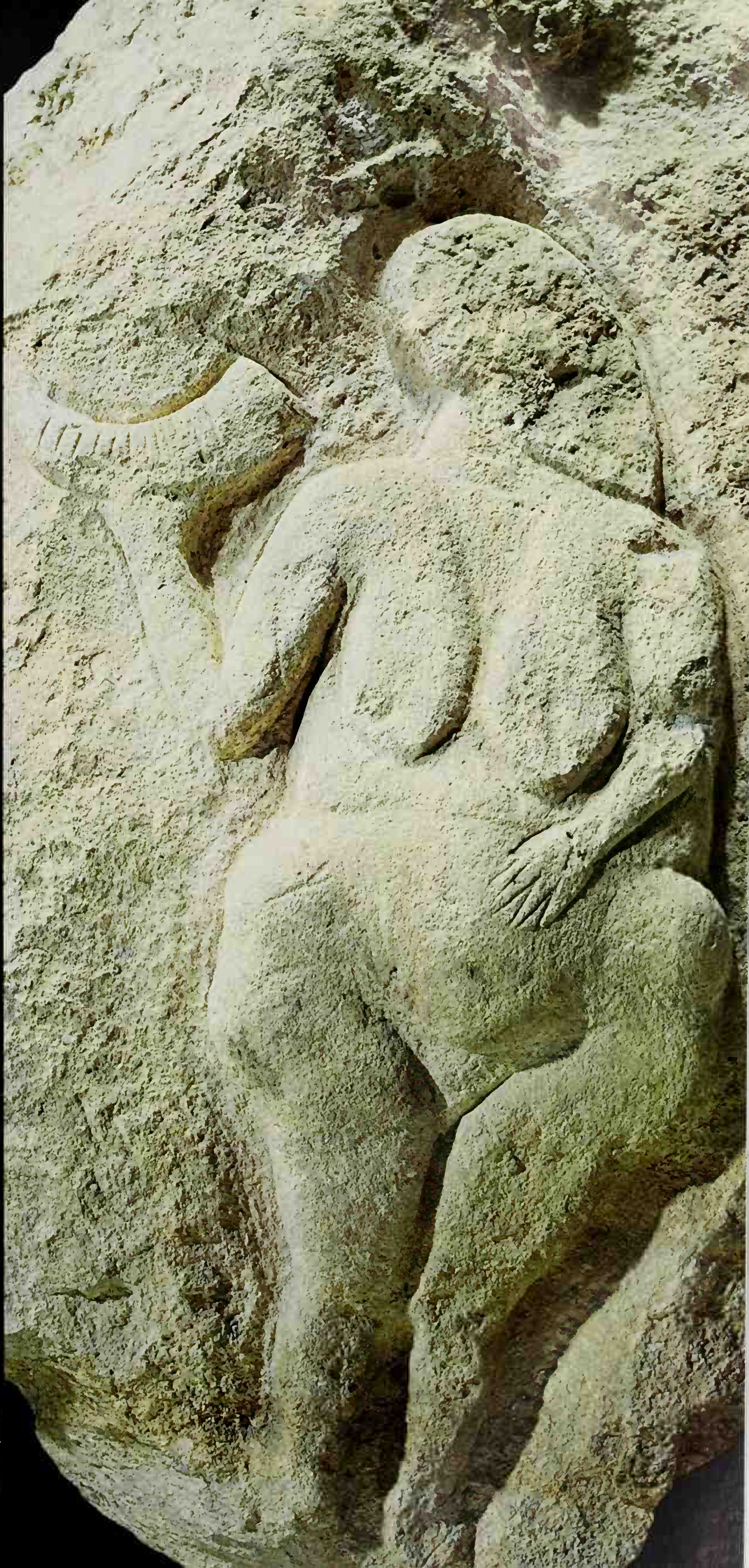
HORNS

The outstanding courage and virility of the male horned animal led man to adopt the horn as the emblem of manhood; the gods themselves were frequently depicted as horned in ancient times. In Celtic religion the role of horned animals was of special importance; and in an old fertility dance which has survived into this century the dancers wear reindeer horns

A CHALLENGE to man's strength, horned creatures have been both feared and admired by him for millennia. Living in herds they presented an ideal source of food to our hunting ancestors, yet such herds were protected by one or a few dominant males which, when attacked, responded ferociously. Horned males will generally fight to the death against other species, even when severely injured, rather than retreat back into the herd. This savage and completely fearless behaviour even in the face of insuperable odds must have deeply impressed man throughout history as a hunter.

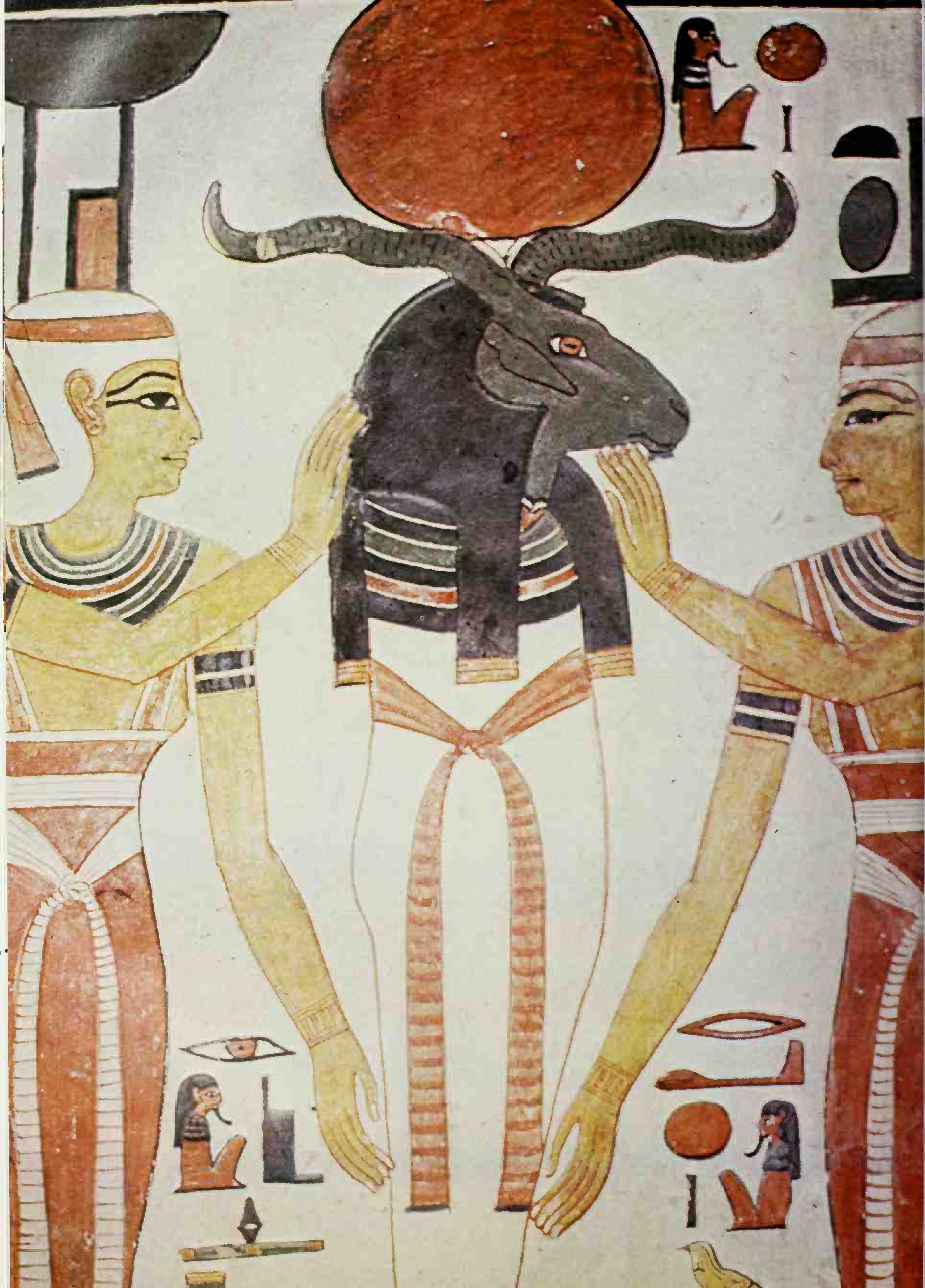
Male horned animals have an additional characteristic that won the attention and admiration of man: their exuberant sexuality. By the Neolithic Age, when man had begun to have some understanding of the male role in procreation, it must have became obvious to him that only a very few bulls or rams were necessary to impregnate an entire herd of female animals. Since strength, courage and sexual power were the primary male virtues in human society, it is little wonder that man constantly used bulls and rams as yardsticks for measuring his own worth. Nor is it difficult to see why he came to believe that these creatures were either endowed with supernatural power or were actual manifestations of gods themselves.

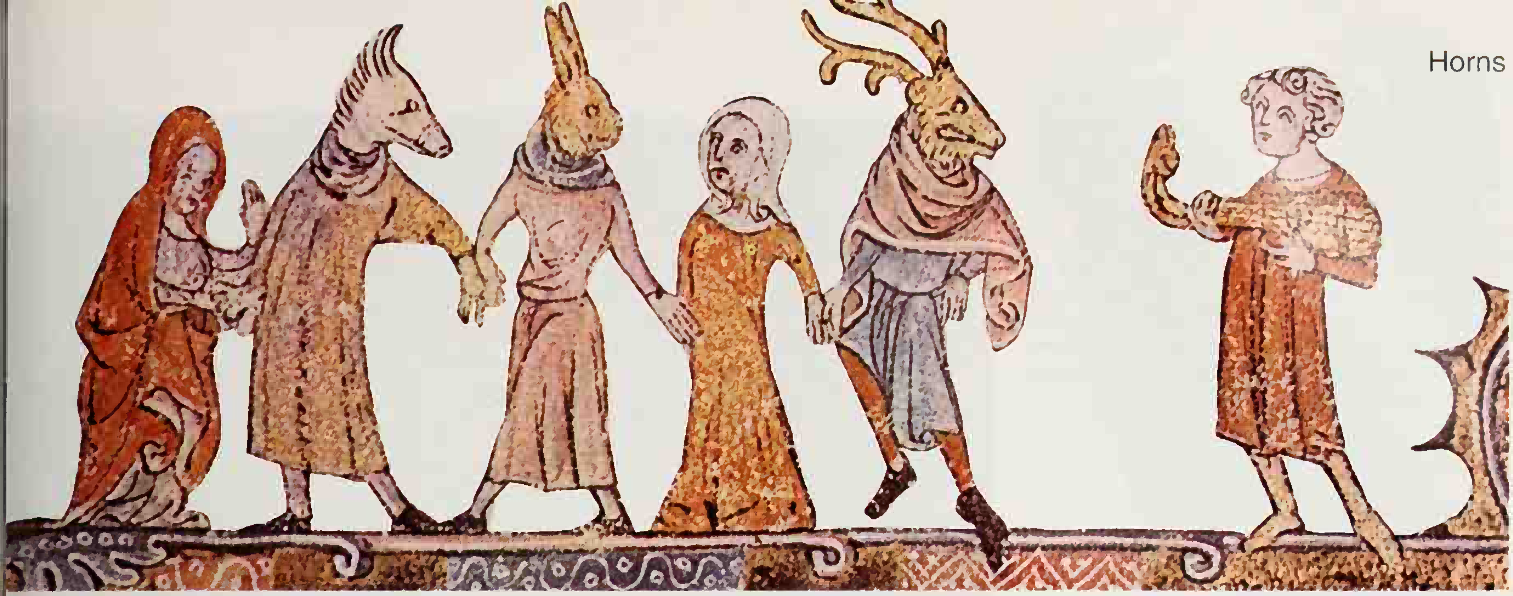
The earliest archeological evidence for the use of animal horns by man comes from a Neanderthal burial site dating from about 60,000 to 70,000 years ago. In this Middle Paleolithic cave of Teshik-tash, located in the mountains of south-western Uzbekistan (Central Asia), the remains of a boy of about nine years of age were discovered. That he was ritually buried seems certain since his head was surrounded



The 'Venus of Laussel', a mother goddess carved on a slab of rock in the Dordogne, clasps a bison's horn to emphasize her role of fertility and creative power

Musée d'Aquitaine




Bodleian Library

Left The Egyptian god Khnum was an ancient god of the Nile, the principal bringer of fertility in Egypt. He was maker of the earth, and creator of gods and men, and his symbol was a ram's head. Isis and Nepthys flanking the sun god Re shown with Khnum's head: from the tomb of Nefartary

Dancing and fertility magic are closely connected in pagan and primitive societies *Above* 14th century Flemish manuscript showing humans dancing and wearing animal heads, a device often used in early rituals as a means of magically acquiring an animal's peculiar attributes *Below* The Abbots Bromley Horn Dance *(left)*, an ancient British ceremony still performed annually in September, and Tanganyikan dancing *(right)* both employ horns to emphasize the fertility aspect of the rite

by five pairs of ibex horns turned with their points down into the earth. One can only speculate as to the significance of this burial, but when we consider the inverted position of the large, recurved horns of this mountain goat, and the youth of the boy, many questions emerge. Was this the son of a great hunter, perhaps the chief of the group? Were the horns symbolic of how he died, did they wish him good hunting in an afterlife, or did they, even at this remote time and place, indicate a phallus-horn equation?

The Horned Sorcerer

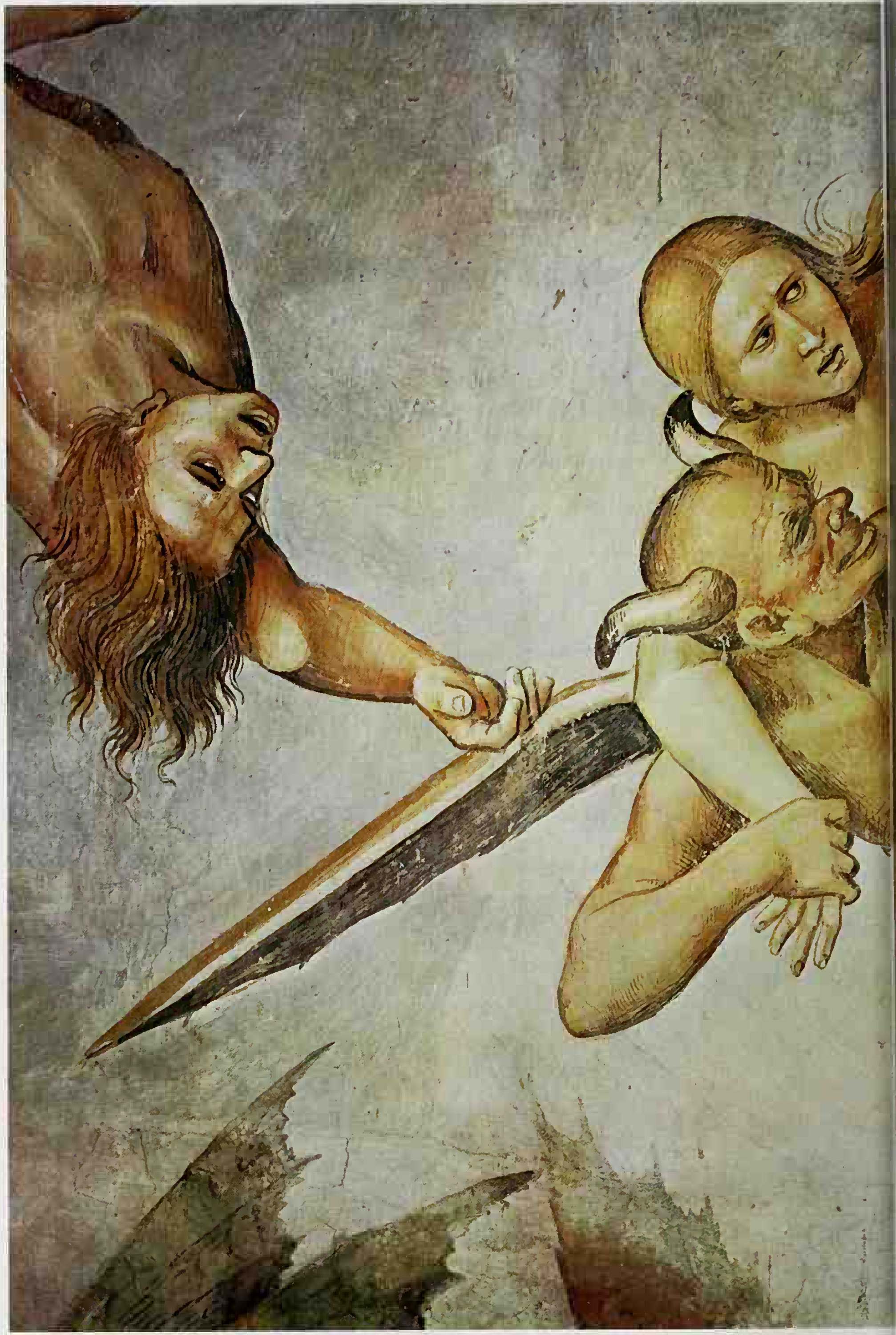
Later, in the Magdalenian era (25,000 to 15,000 years ago), our own ancestors also related themselves to horned animals. In the cave of Les Trois Frères in southern France, there is a painting of a 'Horned Sorcerer' – a depiction of a man wearing large stag or reindeer antlers, skins and a tail. It is generally believed that this figure is a representation of a shaman performing sympathetic magical rituals in connection with animals. Other representations of sorcerers have been found in other caves; some are bull-men, some bison-men, while others are bird-men or stag-men. Other aspects of the horn in the Upper Paleolithic are indicated by the so-called 'Venus of Laussel' incised on the walls of a cave in the Dordogne. This figure is that of a nude woman who holds a curved horn in her upraised right hand.

With the coming of the Neolithic Age, and the change in the relationships of man to

Popperfoto

Camera Press London

Right The horned Christian devil may have been derived from the great bull god of Mithraism, or from the goat, sacred animal of the Teutonic god Thor; as late as the 17th century, British witches admitted that the Devil had appeared to them in the guise of a bull; devil bearing off a young woman, by Signorelli; from Orvieto cathedral *Far right* A Hindu horned demon, fierce, blood-drinking and man-eating, from *A Treatise on Astrology and Divination* by Mohammed al-Sudi



the animals he had hunted for his food, the cattle-raising cultures of the south and east spread across the lands where formerly the great herds of bison, reindeer and wild cattle had roamed. In this new culture bulls, while still symbols of strength and power, came to be valued for their fertility and procreative power as well. In the Late Neolithic Age this concept of fertility was utilized in agriculture itself, in the magical securing of a bountiful crop. For centuries following the invention of the plough man continued to give the credit for better crops to the bull and not to the plough itself, which was regarded as merely serving the function of opening the earth to let in the great fertilizing force of the bull. The earliest method of ploughing seems to have been done by attaching lines to the horns of a bull and leading them directly to a plough. Thus the horns themselves were believed to be charged with great fertilizing power and for centuries after the invention of the yoke, ploughing of a ceremonial nature continued to be done in this manner. Not only were the horns symbols of the power of death and destruction but of the power of life as well.

With the rise of historical civilizations examples of the horn as a symbol of supernatural power abound. Gods of antiquity were frequently depicted with horns, and kings and priests were horned to indicate their special powers. Horns became dissociated from the powerful animals they originally represented and were frequently given to animals with which they are not associated in Nature. This is true of the Thracian horned snake Zagreus and a similar horned snake in American Indian legend. The art of Central and North American Indians shows many examples of horned and plumed serpents, dragons and jaguars, in addition to the buffalo bulls' horns which were attributes of many American Indian gods. Likewise the Chinese Dragon of the Infinite was horned.

Status Symbol

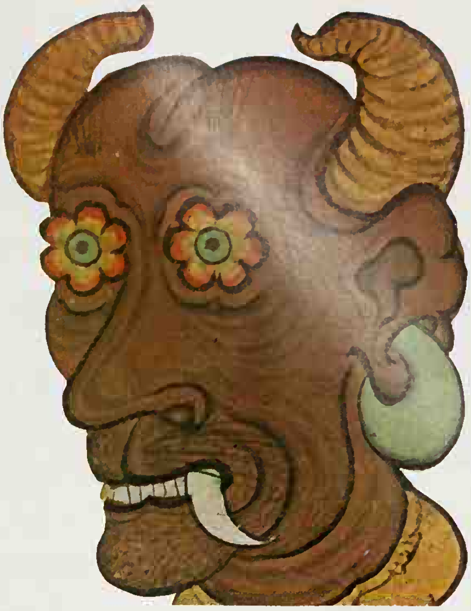
There was a strong tradition of horn symbolism among the Teutonic peoples of Northern Europe. Like that of the Celts, the old Norse religion has to be studied mostly from writings made long after the religion had been abandoned. It is thought, however, that the figure of three interlocked horns found on a rune stone in Snoldelev in Denmark was the sign of the god Odin, and that the goat was one of the oldest attributes of Thor (or Donar). A Scandinavian rock carving of the Bronze Age shows a figure with two hammers and a horned head and these symbols of divinity may be older in fact than the belief in Thor. The ancient Teutonic god Heimdall was associated with a ram and an early myth relates that the sound of his horn could be heard throughout the world. The horned head-dresses characteristic of Scandinavian warriors of 2000 BC were still worn as late as 1000 AD by the Viking raiders who ravaged the coasts of Europe. The wearing of horned helmets was probably derived from an earlier custom of wearing a head-dress of the skin of the animal, with horns attached, as a means of securing the power of the animal. In addition, it appears likely that a widespread belief existed that by wearing horns one received supernatural protection. Not only the Scandinavians but the Sardinians, Etruscans, Romans, Greeks, Celts, Anglo-Saxons, Huns and others wore such horned helmets.

In the Indus River civilization of the 3rd millennium BC there is much evidence that the bull was the centre of worship. Many clay seals from this region depict the aurochs (wild ox) or a Brahma bull in what appears to be a ritualistic context. On several seals the god is depicted in a humanized form as bull-horned and three-faced. The origins of the Hindu god Shiva have been traced to this early bull god. The hymns of the later *Rig-Veda* refer to the various Aryan bull gods:

Scala

Indra the bull with a thousand horns, Parjanya the god of thunder and rain, Dyaus the remote overlord, Rudra the god of the lightning flash and lord of the thunderbolt, Agni the horned god of fire.

Nowhere were horned gods more widely and deeply revered than in the ancient lands of the Near East and the Mediterranean world. As early as 3000 BC the supreme god of fertility of the Sumerians was the bull god Enlil. In addition to this high god many of the various city gods of early Sumeria were horned gods, some depicted as bulls, some as men with bull's heads or horns, some as human-headed bulls. Sumerian and Babylonian priests wore horns on their head-dresses and were perhaps themselves manifestations of the gods they served. Kings began to wear bull-horned head-dresses as symbols of their divine appointment and power. There are many seals and stelae (inscribed slabs or pillars) which indicate the relative status of the depicted deities and kings by the number of horns in their mitres. With the rise to eminence of the city of Babylon (c 2000 BC) the sun god of the city, Marduk, became the supreme god of the pantheon. He was also a bull god and virtually fused with Enlil. He is shown on the Stele of the Code of Hammurabi as a man wearing a horned mitre, and on a relief from Nineveh with horns branching from his head. The symbol of the god Anu was a horned cap and these caps, mounted upon shrines, often served as boundary markers in Babylonia. At the ancient cities of Susa and Babylon the chief temple itself was furnished with horns.


Bibliotheque Nationale Paris

The beginning of dynastic Egyptian history is marked by the uniting of the Upper and Lower Kingdoms of the Nile Valley under Narmer-Menes (c 3500 BC). The symbol of this king was a bull and with unification the bull cult of Apis spread throughout Egypt. At a very early date Egyptian bull worship became identical with king worship. The related symbolism of bulls and kings is shown by a tomb of an early king of the 1st Dynasty which is surrounded by a frieze of clay bulls' heads mounted with actual bulls' horns; Egyptian queens were associated with cows. Another cult, that of the bull Mnevis, was instituted during the 2nd Dynasty. Osiris, the god of vegetation and fertility, was fused with the dead Apis to become Serapis and in Graeco-Roman times his cult was spread by the Roman Legions over most of the civilized world. His spouse, Isis, was a horned cow-woman goddess as was Hathor, who was the celestial cow bearing the moon between her horns. The latter sometimes wore ram's horns as the female counterpart of the ram of Mendes. In addition to these major gods there were also the cults of the golden bull of Canopus, the white bull of Min and various other local bulls.

The Bull of Jacob

The gods of the peoples of the ancient Levant reflect the poor soil and unpredictable rainfall of that region. The supreme god was a god who ruled over the rain, lightning and thunderstorm and he was believed to be a wild bull. The bucranium, a bull's head viewed from the front with great, curving horns is a motif commonly occurring on artefacts of the 4th millennium. Later, when the Hittites rose to power, the worship of the bull as weather god was one of the basic features of their religion. It was the only divine animal among the Hittites. The conception in human form of the bull-weather-god is Teshub who wears a horned cap and frequently holds a leashed bull. Closely related to Teshub is a bull god known according to his location as Adad, Hadad, Ramman, Sandas and Baal. The earliest known bull god of the Hebrews was called the 'Bull of Jacob' and the estrangement between Moses and Aaron as described in Exodus was either the result of the clash between two rival bull cults or

The horn was a symbol of fertility and the broken horn with its liberated power was considered to be the horn of plenty, the cornucopia

between two leaders for the control of one cult. Moses himself is described as 'horned' in the Vulgate perhaps having assumed the sign of power of the old horned god. The Hebrew god of the storm, Yahweh, was fused in time with Baal and this Yahweh-Baal fusion continued until the death of Solomon, when Jeroboam urged the northern tribes to return to the worship of their old bull gods. Like the bull, the ram was originally a sacred animal to the Jews so that the ram's horn, the *shofar*, was to represent the voice of the god. The Assyrian horned god Asshur was both a warrior god and god of fertility.

The Minoan civilization of Crete was the location of a great solar bull cult, although to a lesser degree the bull was linked with earthquakes. Minos the king was apparently the incarnation of the island bull god and the focus of cult activities. The stone 'horns of consecration' (formalized horns, indicating sacredness) were used to designate holy places and the horned altar appears in the Theseus legend. These ritual horns probably originated in the shrine of a buried bull which was regarded as a focus of life itself. One important aspect of the bull fertility rites is that of horn grappling. In Crete as in Asia Minor there existed the belief that the great procreative and physical power of the bull was somehow brought to a focus in his horns. The ritual athletes of the Cretan bull cult arena grasped the horns of the sacred animal as it charged them and were somersaulted over its back, thus absorbing the potent strength and fertility of the creature for the benefit of all men (see CRETE). The sacred animal was sacrificed to obtain his blessings for the land and its people.

Bull Cults of Greece

In Greek religion, c 1000 BC, there are two converging strains of bull worship, those of the tribes of Ionians, Achaeans and Dorians from the north and of the Cretan colonizers of the south. One of the oldest and most popular of the Grecian bull cults was devoted to the worship of Dionysus, a god of fertility. Among his many titles are 'Horned Child', 'The Horned Deity', 'Bull-horned' and 'Horn-bearing'. His images were frequently horned. In the Dionysian mysteries there is a fusion of bull-worshipping traditions from all over the ancient world.

Zeus, the father god of Greece, is linked in several rites with bulls. As a bull himself he figures prominently in Greek mythology. Zeus *Olbios*, from northern Greece, was a god of fertility depicted as a bull-horned man. Zeus's wife, Hera, was associated with the cow and at Samos her image was a wooden post with cow horns attached near the top. The satyrs, representatives of the spirits of the woods and mountains, wore goats' horns. And Pan, who was once worshipped as a ram, also was horned.

As in Crete, so in Greece, the horns of the bull were considered to be the seat and focus of his strength. Numerous examples in Greek architecture show where the horned frontal portion of the ox skull was attached to the frieze of a temple. There is some evidence that the volutes or spiral conformations of Ionic architecture are derived from horns. The horn was a symbol of fertility and the broken horn with its liberated power was considered to be the horn of plenty, the cornucopia. A Greek vase painting shows Hercules about to break the horn of the bull-bodied river god Achelous while a nearby horn is shown as the source of a stream of water. In this connection it is interesting to note that the sacred River Ganges is represented in Hindu myth as arising from the head of the bull god Shiva.

Evidence of ancient bull cults, both prehistoric and historic in time, in the form of figures of bulls and bull-horned men has been found throughout Italy and in Sicily and Sardinia as well. These would appear to be gods of strength and fertility. Likewise a river god with the horns of a bull is widely depicted in Etruscan art. The Itali worshipped the bull god Mars, lord of battle, and wore the horns of bulls on their helmets. The Salii, priests of Mars, also wore a horned head-dress. In the middle of the 1st century BC, the Persian cult of Mithras came to Rome and developed into an immensely popular and powerful rival of Christianity. Mithras was early associated with the cult of the bull and as Lord of Fecundity was in part the fertilizing bull he slew in the best known of his myths.

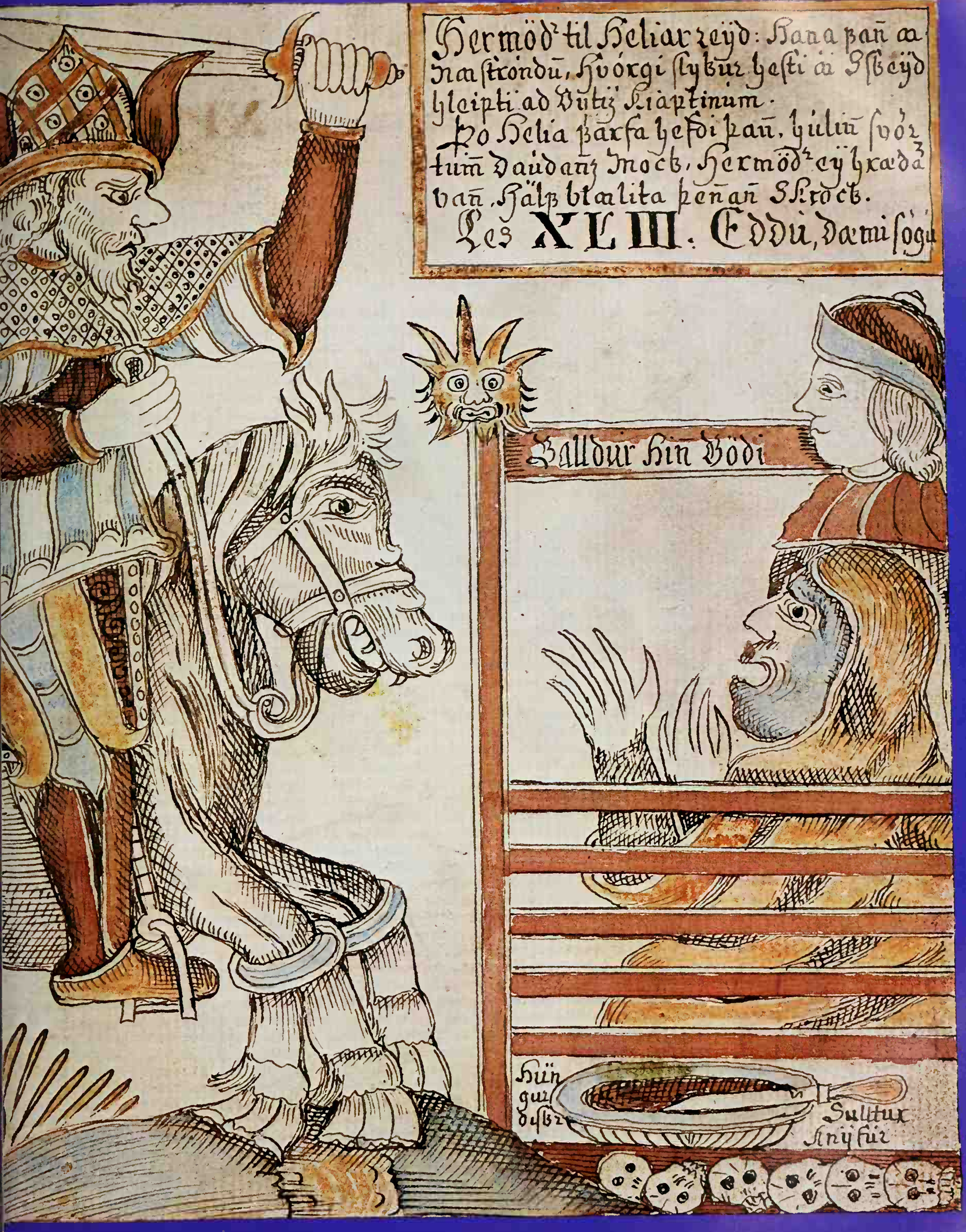
In addition to the horned gods, there are horned demons. For example, in Persian mythology the animal representations of evil powers were often horned. There are horned demons in Hindu and Buddhist mythology. The Devil of the Christians may be the great bull god of Mithraism surviving through the familiar process whereby former gods of eclipsed religions become the demons of the new; a principle known as 'henotheism'. According to the first theological definition of the Devil, reached at the Council of Toledo in 447 AD, he is 'a large black monstrous apparition with horns on his head, cloven hoofs . . . an immense phallus, and a sulphurous smell.' There are other evidences of the survival of this horned figure during the first ten centuries of the Christian era. Indeed, as late as the 16th and 17th centuries in England and Scotland, accused witches admitted that the Devil had appeared to them in the form of a bull. Whether he was derived from the Mithraic bull or, as some folklorists believe, from the goat as the sacred animal of Thor (Donar) the Teutonic god of thunder, one has only to attend the services of certain fundamentalist religious sects in the United States and Europe to realize that the idea of the 'Horned One' as an all powerful and fertile benefactor in Western society has been changed into that of a diabolical and satanic creature.

JACK CONRAD

Celtic Horned Gods and Beasts

The Celts, like many other peoples, venerated horned beasts and used the horns symbolically as insignia of virility and divine power. Many early Celtic helmets were decorated with horns, and a warrior, by wearing such head-gear would not only stress his own martial and male qualities, but ensure for himself the protection of the deity whose particular attribute they were. A god bearing the horns of his cult beast added the strength and powers of the horns to his own magical godhood. The Celts, like their immediate ancestors, the bronze-using people known to archeologists as the Urnfield people, held the symbol of the horn or antler in such superstitious awe that they frequently adorned non-horned beasts and birds with them, or exaggerated those of horned animals by

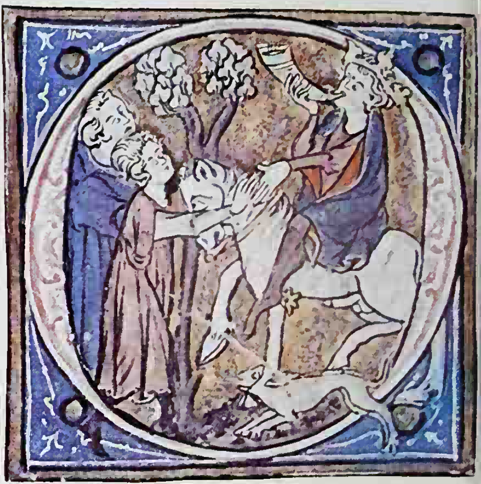
In early societies the horn was a symbol of supernatural power and protection. The wearing of horned helmets probably stemmed from an earlier custom of wearing a head-dress of the skin of the animal with horns attached as a means of securing the power of the animal: illustration from the *Edda* showing the Norse god Hermod in a horned helmet assailing the gate of the underworld to fetch back the beautiful Balder


Hermödr til Heliar reyd: Nana þañ á
Nástrondū, Hvórgi slybur hesti á Isbeyd
hleipti ad Vitiz Kiáptinum.
Þo Helia þarfa hefdi þañ, hüliñ svör
tum daudanz mock, Hermödr ey hrádá
vañ, Hälþ blaalita þeñañ Skrock.
Les XLIII. Eddu, dæmisögu
Balldur hin Gödi
Hün
gur
diskr
Sultur
knyfur

The Miraculous Horn

The unicorn was most renowned for the miraculous power against poison supposedly possessed by its horn. The rich had drinking cups made of unicorn horn, the poor had small pieces with which to test their food and drink, for it was firmly believed that even the tiniest fragment would sweat and change colour in the presence of poison, and two famous horns which are still in St Mark's in Venice are worn thin from innumerable scrapings. Alicorn, a unicorn's horn, was an essential item of the apothecaries' stock until the eighteenth century, and at one time powdered horn was valued at ten times its weight in gold, while whole horns were almost beyond price. There were famous horns: one kept in a dark vault in the French Cathedral of St Denis, so potent that even the water in which it had been steeped would cure the sick.

Peter Lum *Fabulous Beasts*



Horned male animals will generally fight to the death even when injured and by blowing a horn it was hoped to inspire courage and strength *Above* King Arthur receives requests for help and summons his knights with horn blasts *Right* The ram was a sacred animal worshipped by the early Jews and the ram's horn, the shofar, was thought to represent the voice of the god himself. It is still sounded for devout inspirational purposes on the most solemn religious occasions: blowing the shofar at the Wailing Wall in Jerusalem

adding knobs to the end of flamboyant bull horns, or giving a horned beast three instead of two horns.

Gods and goddesses alike were given this badge of physical power and sexual force. In some instances the horns or antlers were fashioned from the material used for the whole portrayal, in others, holes were left for the insertion of these – real horn in some cases, and in others no doubt made of some precious metal such as gold or silver. In the case of stone sculptures it was easier to portray horns in vestigial form, on top of the head or flat along the brow, rather than as fully developed and standing free from the crown; and this was frequently done. In the case of the early metalwork they are often used schematically, to blend with the overall pattern, or are grossly exaggerated into great swelling protrusions on either side of the head.

The superstitious veneration which the Celts accorded to horned beasts and to the symbol of the horn, then, was nothing new in Celtic times, and was probably ancient by the time of the Urnfield period, that is between about 1400 and 700 BC. As early as Hallstatt times (c 700 – 650 BC) the composite cult animal so familiar in later Celtic iconography, the ram-horned or ram-headed serpent, has appeared amongst the grave goods of the rich iron-using aristocracy of this early Celtic period. This strange beast was to become the regular companion of the powerful stag god in subsequent Celtic mythology, as well as being a frequent companion of the native war god, whose attributes remained fairly consistent while his name varied from place to place, from tribe to tribe, throughout the Celtic world. The very prominent position occupied by this beast, its large size, and the various ways in which it is depicted suggest that rather than being a mere attribute or cult symbol of these deities, it was divine in itself. However, in the insular literature the sacred beasts are invariably imbued with the powers of human speech and understanding, and there is usually a legend explaining their origin and existence in human shape before they took on animal form, and such may in all probability be the case with the ram-serpent.

The Celts had many basic religious concepts in common with the other barbarian peoples of Europe, but it is what they did with these ideas, and how they developed them and made them distinctively their own, that is so interesting. Just as the Celtic artists borrowed basic designs and motifs from the ancient Northern European world, from the Greeks and Etruscans with whom they had trade contacts, and from the vivid and powerful animal art of the Scythians, and blended the various elements into a whole which is quite unique and original – so they used religious ideas common over a wide geographical area, and wove them into a distinctive mythology.

Many people venerated horns, and used them as some symbol or other in their religious expression, but the Celts not only venerated horns and certain horned animals – they had a complex mythology in which, even in the fragmentary state in which we are now able to view it, horned animals and their relationship with the anthropomorphic deities played a fundamental and systematic role.

Guardian of Peace and War

Two very distinctive, but by no means mutually exclusive, cults of horned deities can be detected throughout the Celtic world. The first cult is that of an antler-bearing god whose appearance in representations is suggestive of a benign deity, concerned with fertility and economic prosperity; but, like all Celtic deities, he was also a god of war and protector of his people. But it is his pacific aspects which predominate in his representational character, and these are reflected in the traces of him which can be detected in the written literatures of the Celtic world. The second cult is that of a ram-horned or bull-horned god, aggressively militant, usually naked – the Celts traditionally went into battle unclad – weapon-bearing, often phallic; he is essentially the god invoked by restless warring tribes, and there is some evidence that he is a god much favoured in pastoralist societies where there was constant internecine strife. But the two cults cannot be completely separated and, like the antlered god, the bull-horned god is often brought into rapport with the Roman Mercury, no doubt in his earlier role of protector of flocks and herds. In the case of the stag god, the Roman deity's concern with economic prosperity would provide a convincing link, while the Celtic god's frequent appearance as 'lord of the animals' would associate him with Mercury in his pastoral role, and also with his cruder counterpart in his milder aspect. As would be expected, in Britain the horned warrior god is found in the restless, pastoralist north, while the stag god is concentrated in the mild, economically prosperous and pacific south-western region.

The stag god seems to be one of the most ancient and widely distributed of the Celtic deities. In one inscription, from Paris, he is called *–ernunnos*; and it has been supposed, very reasonably, that the missing initial letter was C, giving a reading *Cernunnos*, 'the Horned One'. It is convenient to refer to the stag god by this name, but there is no evidence that he was so called throughout the entire Celtic area, although it is possible that this was the case. He appears as early as the 4th century BC on a rock carving in the ancient sanctuary at Val Canonica, in northern Italy, bearing antlers, carrying the sacred torque (neck ornament) that was one of his most regular attributes. There are other early examples of the stag god, but the most impressive dates to the 1st century BC and shows the god in his most typical aspect. He is figured on the famous silver bowl found in a bog at Gundestrup, in Jutland. Exaggerated antlers spring from his head, matched by those of a stag which stands on his right side. A wolf attends him on his left. Other beasts complete the scene, the god sitting in mastery over all.

One of the most impressive verbal accounts of the god – although the deity in question is unspecified – comes from the *Mabinogion* in the story of 'The Lady of the Fountain'. It is prophesied that Cynon, son of Clydno, will encounter a huge black man twice the size of ordinary men, one-footed and with one eye in his forehead, sitting in the middle of a mound in a forest,

Palphot

with wild animals grazing about him. The prophecy is duly fulfilled and Cynon asks the man 'what power he had over the animals'. Grasping his mighty club, the man strikes a stag so that it gives out a great sound, to which wild animals 'as numerous as the stars in the firmament' flock into the clearing, bowing their heads 'even as humble subjects would do to their lord'.

The mention of the single foot and single eye of this character emphasizes his divine nature; the use of one leg, one arm and one eye was a ritual posture among the pagan Celts. He is also described as being dark, and of great size, characteristics of otherworld beings. Although there is no specific reference to horns, it is clear that this figure is a divinity having complete mastery over the animals; and the fact that it is the stag that compels all the other beasts seems to be clear proof that we are in fact concerned here with a deity of the type of the stag god Cernunnos, just as we are on the plate of the Gundestrup cauldron, which portrays such a character surrounded by the beasts of whom he is in complete control. The fact that he figures in medieval manuscripts with his horned serpent attribute in the role of a devil further emphasizes the powerful nature of his cult.

The second type of horned god, the ram-horned or bull-horned deity of a warlike, pastoral people, is also attested by the iconography of Roman Gaul and Britain, and by the early Celtic literatures. A portrayal of this deity from Unterhambach equates the Celtic bull-horned god with Mercury, holding a purse and accompanied by serpents. The other, from Nantes, shows the god with enormous, exaggerated horns. His left hand is raised and his right hand grasps a spherical object in the manner of some of the horned gods of North Britain. Below the god is a ram, and to the left a serpent. In North Britain, the horned god may figure as a war-god, or as a naked, phallic deity with obvious affinities to Silvanus (a Roman god, similar to Pan). Sometimes, in most typically Celtic fashion he appears as a horned head alone.

Warriors and Divine Beings

Over and above these two clearly defined types of horned god there is a selection of horned figures which do not seem to fit closely into either division. For example, an impressive horned bust from Moresby, Lancashire, is clearly of native import, but the pleated garment which covers his shoulders and the general appearance of the work seem to have little connection either with Cernunnos or with the bull-horned god so prevalent in these northern regions. The early literatures contain fascinating references to horn-bearing divine beings and there are allusions to horn-bearing warriors which seem to have puzzled the Christian scribes themselves, and which are sometimes rationalized by them. For example, in one of the early Irish manuscripts, the 'Fitness of Names' *(Coir Anmann)*, a person called Furbaide Ferbend, 'Furbaide the Horned', is mentioned. He is described as having two horns of silver and a horn of gold out of his helmet, but in another version of his story he is said to have been horn-bearing: 'two horns grew on the head of staunch, fair Furbaide.' Another hero, Feradach Fechtnach, 'Feradach the Fortunate', is described as being a magnificent warrior; he is referred to as 'the horned one'.

The early Welsh triads contain references to bull-warriors which seem intended to be understood in two ways: they associate the strength of the hero with the powers of the bull in a purely conventional way while, at the same time, there may well have been an echo from the earlier mythology in the references to 'Three Bull-spectres of the Island of Britain', and 'Three Bull-protectors of the Island of Britain' and 'Three Bull-chieftains of the Island of Britain'.

Horns were venerated amongst the Celts, and horned beasts were hunted and adored as deities and symbols of godhood and martial powers. Perhaps one of the most impressive divinities of the pagan Celtic world was the great brown bull of early Irish mythology, the Donn of Cualnge, round whose deeds a whole epic was centred. Like his rival, the Findbennach, 'White-Horned,' he originally had a human form, taking on bull form after a series of metamorphoses but retaining his human reason and understanding. He is clearly the god of a pastoral, warlike society, having the mighty bull as his tangible form. This great bull god, protector of warriors, averter of evil, conveyor of fertility and maker of magical music, who is so important in Celtic tradition, seems to epitomize the horned warrior-god we have seen from the early iconography. The cult of horns and horn-bearing and antler-bearing deities may be said to constitute one of the most ancient and deeply rooted of all Celtic cult concepts, to such an extent that the horned god was one of the most repugnant and hostile of pagan divinities in the eyes of early Christianity, and one which strong measures were taken to exorcize.

ANNE ROSS

Fertility Dance of the Horns

EACH YEAR on the Monday after the first Sunday after 4 September, a group of men gather at the door of the church of St Nicholas in Abbots Bromley, Staffordshire. They receive from the vicar the six sets of reindeer horns, the hobby horse, the crossbow and other properties and costumes required for the Horn Dance, which is unique in Great Britain.

The small company of about a dozen men lines up for its first 'run' on the vicarage lawn. This is the start of a 'progress' out of the town and across country. On reaching a farm they form a line, the music strikes up and they begin to run.

Each run follows a regular sequence. There are six deer-men, each carrying on his shoulders a set of reindeer antlers. These six lead a dance in single file. They are followed by four other characters – a hobby horse, a man-woman (called Maid Marian), a fool and a small boy with crossbow and arrow. Two musicians play.

Three of the deer-men have blue antlers, three have white. At first the Blue and the White keep apart, both small columns coiling and twisting in serpentine patterns. When Blue leader meets White, they bend and curtsy with their antlers in greeting. The four extra characters tail along behind impassively except for an occasional clack from the Crossbow, as he takes a shot at the Blue leader.

After a while, the Blue leader gives a signal and the coil opens out into a circle, flattening to a longways set with all ten dancers facing inwards. Three Blue antlers then face three White antlers, while Horse and Maid Marian face Crossbow and Fool.

Meeting and crossing follows in country dance style while antler meets antler in momentary battle. After meeting and crossing, Blue leader swings away from the set into the follow-my-leader single file and serpentine running is resumed.

The Dance that Creates Life

The Horn Dance seems to be a relic of pagan worship which has been, paradoxically, preserved from ancient times by the Church – possibly as the most practical way of controlling the ceremony.

Dancing and fertility magic are closely connected in primitive societies. The rhythm of the dance creates in the dancers, a feeling of increased liveliness and animation. And so the act of dancing is thought to create life in the broader sense of promoting the fertility of men, herds and crops. The interweaving meet-and-cross figures are as symbolic of fertility and the generation of life as the more obvious symbols of phallus and ladle, carried by two of the characters.

In the early accounts of this dance, the Hobby Horse was the chief actor, and it was known as the Hobby Horse Dance. The Horse has a small carved head, with a hinged lower jaw which can be made to snap at a pull of the rein and a wispy tuft of horse-hair. The head and hair are fixed at opposite points of a metal hoop, slung from the dancer's shoulders and concealed by his cloak.

Besides the Horse, there is the Maid Marian, a man dressed as a woman, who used to carry the ladle as an emblem of femininity. Her origin is obscure but she may be a faint surviving echo of the great mother goddess of old. The Fool wears the costume of a court jester and carries a phallus, but he represents a much older stock character of mythology, legend and folklore. Crossbow is perhaps the youthful god, the son of the mother goddess, who stands for the rebirth of the crops in spring.

(See also BULL; COW; STAG.)

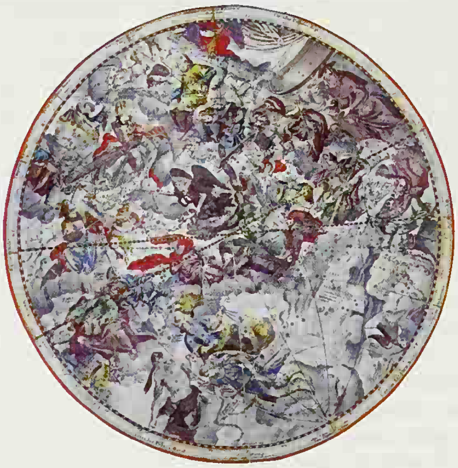
DOUGLAS KENNEDY

FURTHER READING: For horns and horned gods in general: Jack Conrad, *The Horn and the Sword* (MacGibbon and Kee, 1959); H. R. Hays, *In the Beginning: Early Man and His Gods* (Putnam, New York, 1963). For the horn in Celtic mythology see Anne Ross, *Pagan Celtic Britain* (Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1967).

Horoscope

In astrology, a chart or diagram of the heavenly bodies showing the relative positions of the planets at a certain moment in time: given an exact time and place of birth, an astrologer casts an individual's horoscope from which he makes deductions about the person's character and fortunes, and advises on future courses of action.

See ASTROLOGY.



British Museum

To change a horse's name is to alter its luck; a horse hair will turn into an eel if left in water; these and many other beliefs surround an animal which was once considered divine

HORSE

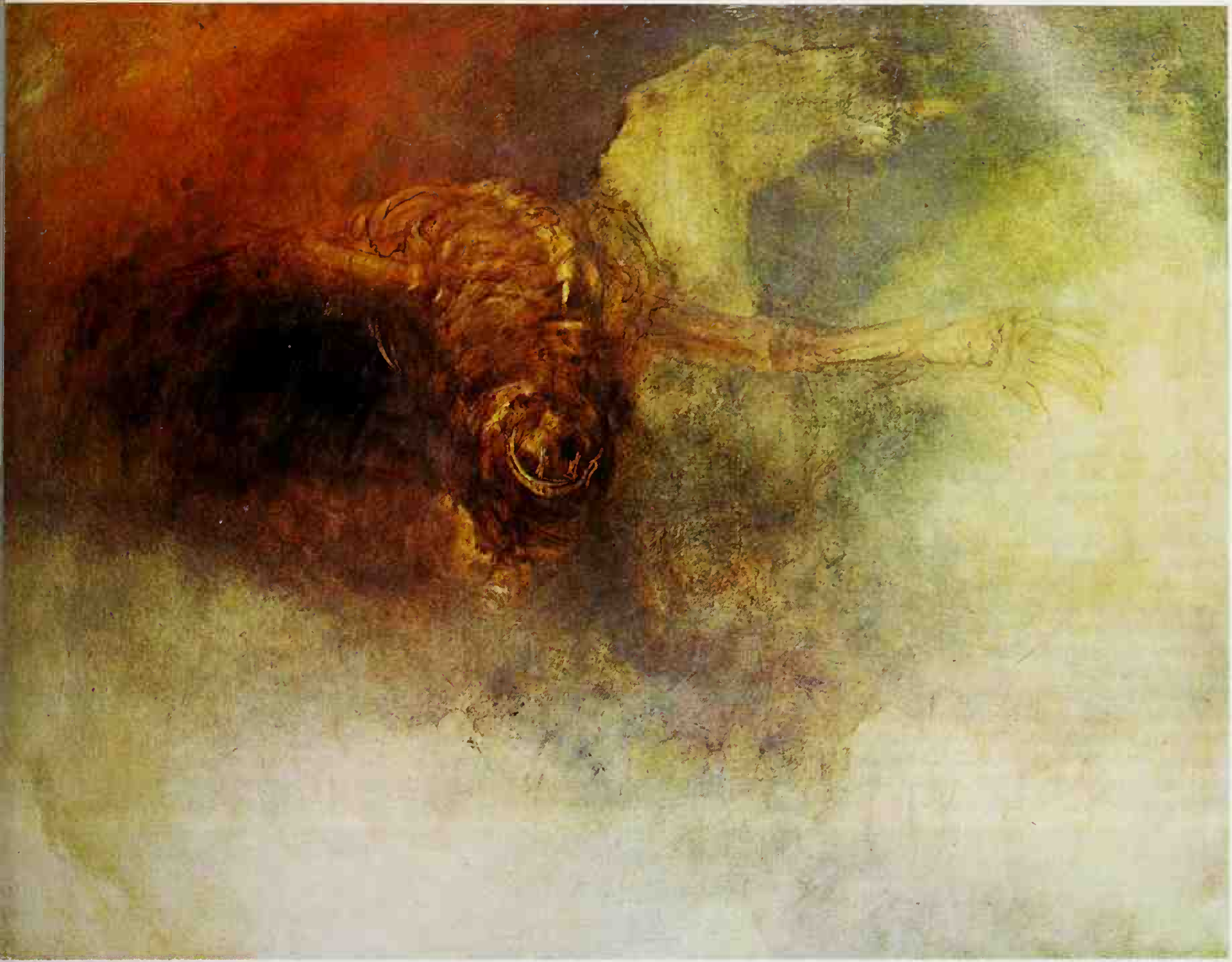
THE MODERN domesticated horse is of Indo-European origin, arriving in Europe and the Near East as part of the vast migration westward of entire peoples. It has been truly said that in the Old World, civilization marched at the pace of the horse for the social development of primitive societies proceeded in direct ratio to the utilization of 'horse power' in its literal sense. South American civilization, in the absence of the horse, relied instead upon the ox and llama as beasts of burden. The triumphant progress of Cortez in Mexico was due as much to the alarm created among the Indians at the sight of the war horses as to the fighting capacity of the invaders.

As a symbol of terrestrial power, the horse was projected into the heavens in the form of the divine horses of the ancient religions, and in this manner became integrated with sky gods. In classical mythology, Poseidon or Neptune is said to have created the horse which became sacred to him, and to have invented horse racing. Among other myths concerning the origins of the horse is that which declared the horse to have been created out of an egg, the symbol of creation.

In Christian art the horse is represented as the symbol of the three saints Anastasius, Hippolytus and Quirinus, who are shown being torn asunder by wild horses. However, to horse-users everywhere, the horse has always symbolized power, speed and pride.

In its role as a divinity the horse has played many parts, of which the divine horses of King Diomedes and the Celtic goddess Epona are prominent examples. Epona, a divinity of the Gauls, was both a goddess and protectress of horses, a tribute to the valour of the Celtic warriors.

Many gods, goddesses and demi-gods



Tate Gallery

The four horsemen of the Apocalypse brought destruction and ruin. The rider of the white horse was armed with a bow, the red with a sword, the black with a balance, and on the pale one rode Death himself: *Death on a Pale Horse* by J. M. W. Turner

were closely associated with the horse in antiquity and Demeter, the Greek fertility goddess, was sometimes represented with the head of a horse. In almost all of the ancient civilizations the sun was believed to have been drawn across the sky in his chariot by celestial horses. It was in this august fashion that Dag, the Norse god of day, was conveyed through the heavens by the white steed 'Shining Mane' which spread its light across the whole living world. According to Norse mythology Mani, the moon goddess, travelled across the sky in a car drawn by Alsvidur, 'the All Swift'. Diana, goddess of the moon, travelled likewise in a horse-drawn chariot. The gods Thor and Helios drove their cosmic chariots through the heavens, while the mighty Odin was borne through the clouds on the back of his eight-footed steed.

Driven Over Precipices

In sacrifice we submit our most precious possessions to the gods, and the horse, the symbol of social power in ancient societies, was accorded this dreadful honour. In Imperial Rome, the October Horse was sacrificed as an offering to Mars. In some of these barbaric rites, horses were driven over precipices as offerings to the sea deities.

Part of the funeral rites of the warlord of old was the obligatory killing of the war horse in order that it might continue to serve its dead master in the afterlife, a custom which continued until as late as the 14th century. The traditional military funeral with its riderless horse, carrying its dead master's boots reversed on either side, is a last surviving relic of this form of sacrifice. The nomadic tribes of the Altai Mountains of Central Asia continued the sacrifice of horses until well into the 20th century, despite attempts to suppress the custom by the Soviet government. In a government poster of the 1920s the skins of flayed horses are displayed on poles above the legend: 'There are no gods. No sacrifices of horses will deliver you from your need.'

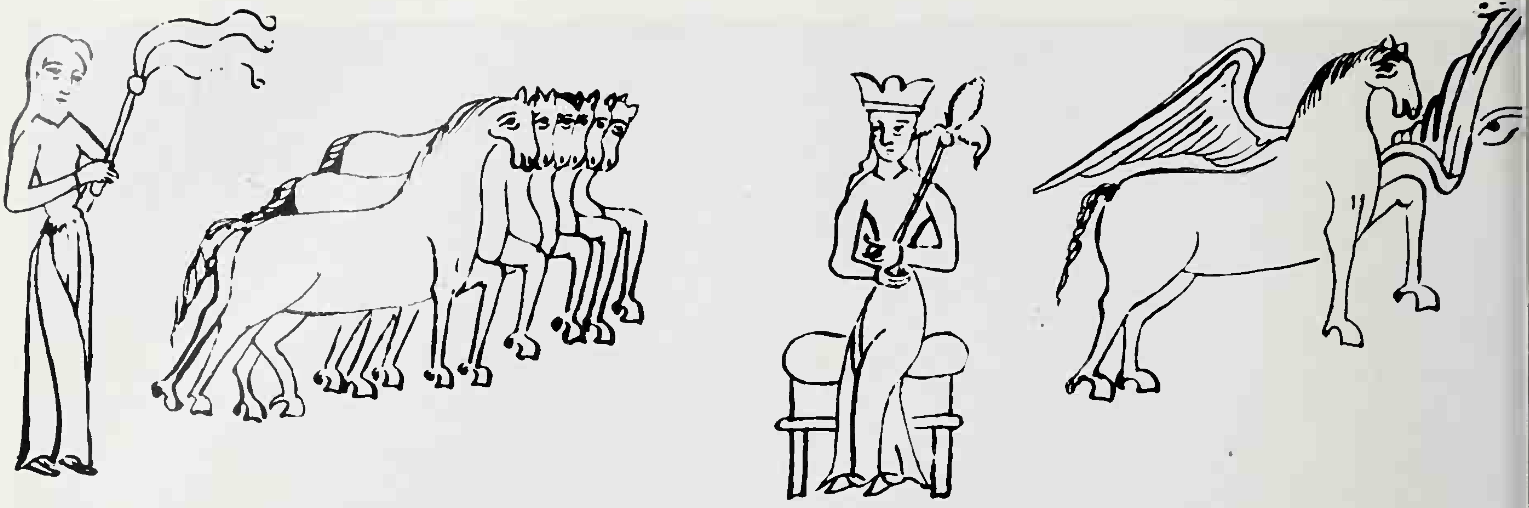
In Western Europe horses were burned alive in rural districts as late as the 18th century as a magical device, intended to remove disease from the remainder of the herd, or were burned alive in order to prevent the death or theft of the other animals.

To ancient man the drama of the heavens was performed by demi-gods, animals and men, the gigantic reflections of their pale selves on earth. The hooves of the divine horses pulling the celestial chariots accounted for the thunder; the whip-lash was the lightning that flashed terrifyingly across the sky; and there were the famous Wind Horses among whom were Pegasus and Hofvarpnir, steed of Gna, messenger of the divine Frigg. Sometimes the heavens would be agitated into a fury of terrifying commotion, as if an army was marching through the clouds. Out of this was born the legend of the Wild Huntsman with his diabolical horse and baying hounds, searching for human souls (see WILD HUNT).

Satanic Steed

Allusions to mystical, allegorical and cosmic horses find a place in many religions including Christianity. In both the Old and New Testaments occur supernatural horses. Elijah and Elisha saw visions of fiery horses and in Revelation, St John describes the terrible horses that harry mankind, having 'tails like serpents'.

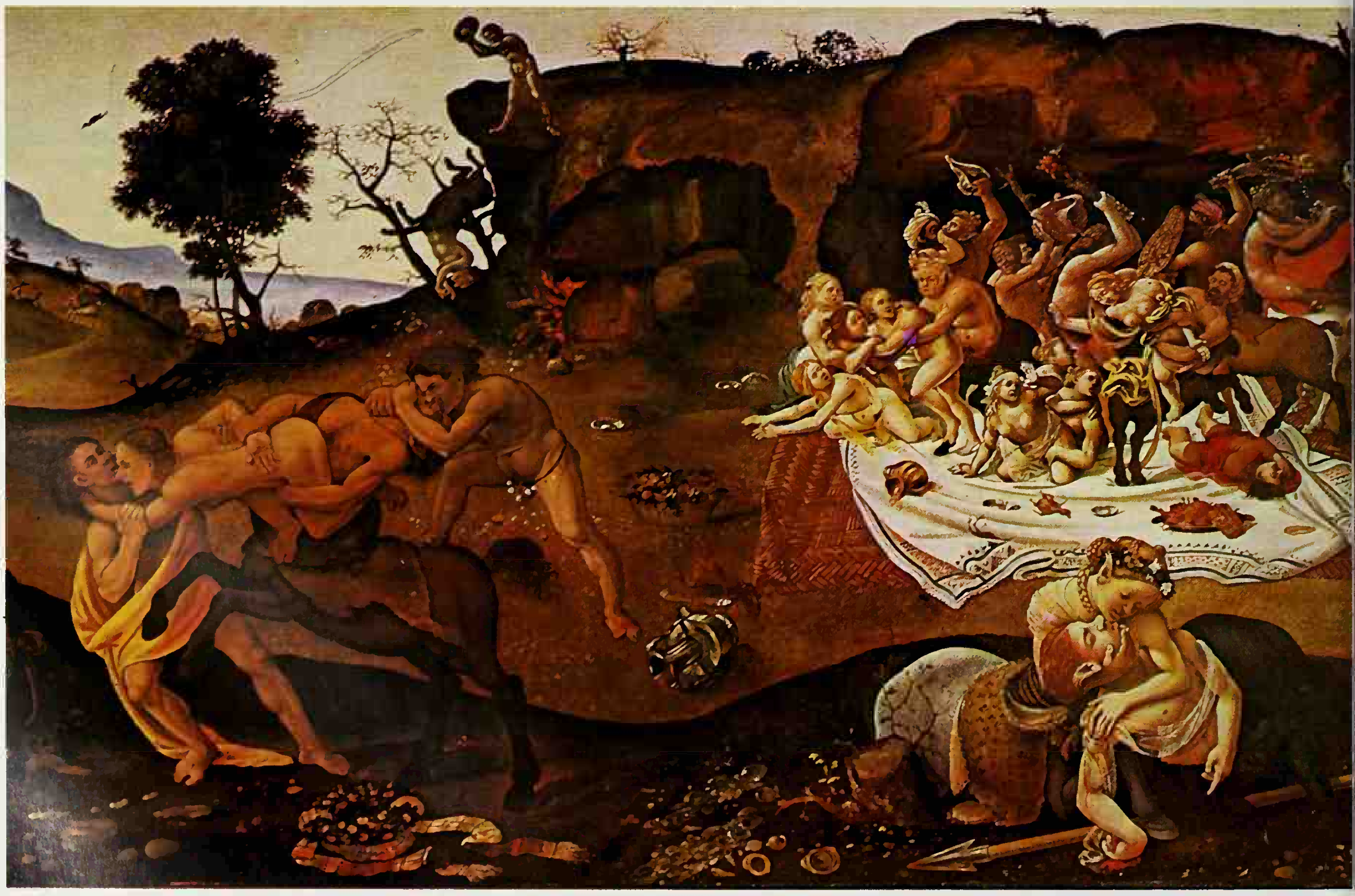
Fairy horses and horsemen were an integral part of the mystical lore of the past, whether

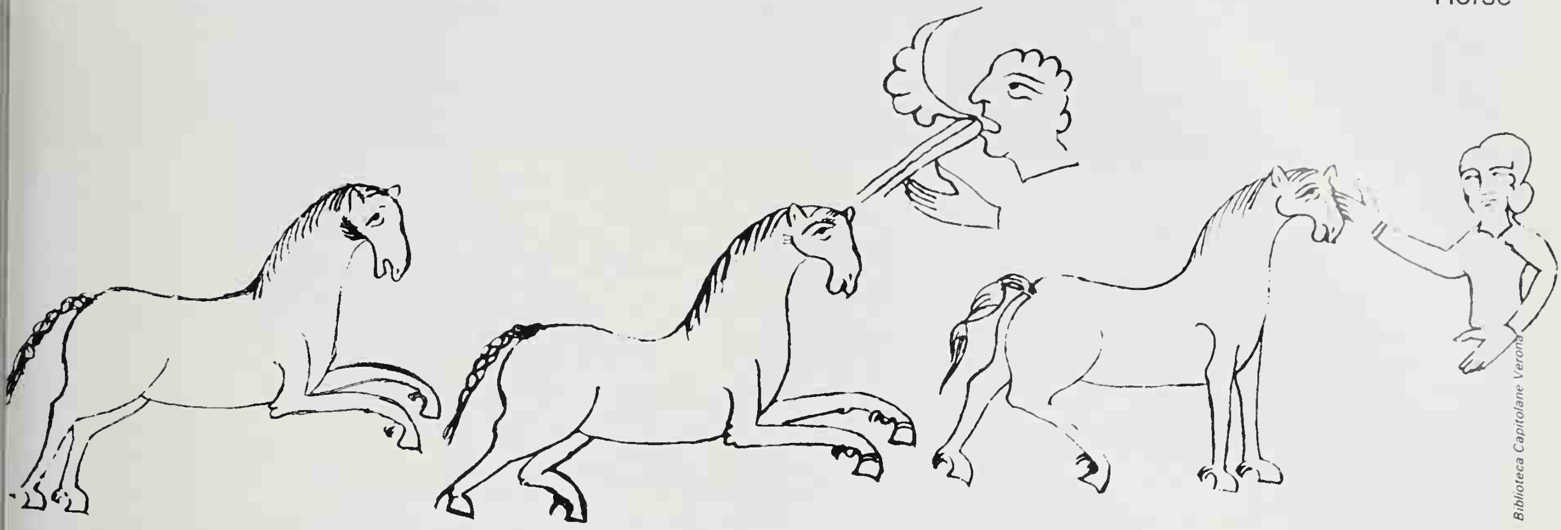


Above **The five senses depicted as the horses which draw the chariot to heaven: sight, the swiftest of the senses is shown winged; touch, the horse rears up to press against the earth; hearing is shown as the response to the sound of speech; smell and taste: illustrations from a late 13th century manuscript** *Below* **Centaurs, part human, part horse, were Greek mythological creatures who often behaved in a savage way: Piero di Cosimo's** ***Fight between the Lapiths and Centaurs***

it was the enchanted horse of the Arabian Nights or the minute mounts of the elves and leprechauns of the West. Fairies were supposed to travel from place to place at fantastic speeds once they had uttered the magical cry, 'Horse and Hattock'. In the demonic beliefs of the past the horse played a central role. There was the colt-pixie, an evil spirit in the guise of a human being which lured horses to their doom. In the annals of witchcraft diabolic colts sometimes become the familiars of witches. Satan himself had been known to manifest himself in the guise of a horse and it was perhaps for this reason that a famous performing horse of the 16th century was burned as a witch in Rouen when taken abroad by its English master.

It was believed that a human being could be transformed by witchcraft into a horse. If the witch approached a sleeping victim and threw a magic halter over his head, he would be immediately transformed into a mount and could be ridden to the witches' sabbath. However, the bewitched human could turn the tables on the hag if he could slip off the bridle and throw it over her head, for she would be transformed into a mare and could be ridden over the countryside until she sank to the ground with exhaustion. Devils and witches were thought to delight in tangling the manes of horses and stealing into the stables and riding them undetected into the night. As a magical defence against such intrusion an amulet in the form of a stone with a hole in it was hung inside the stable door. An example of one of these, recently discovered in Epping Forest, near London, is in the shape of a crudely formed pentacle. Verbal charms both sacred and profane were commonplace in magically-minded Europe. In the





Biblioteca Capitolane Verona

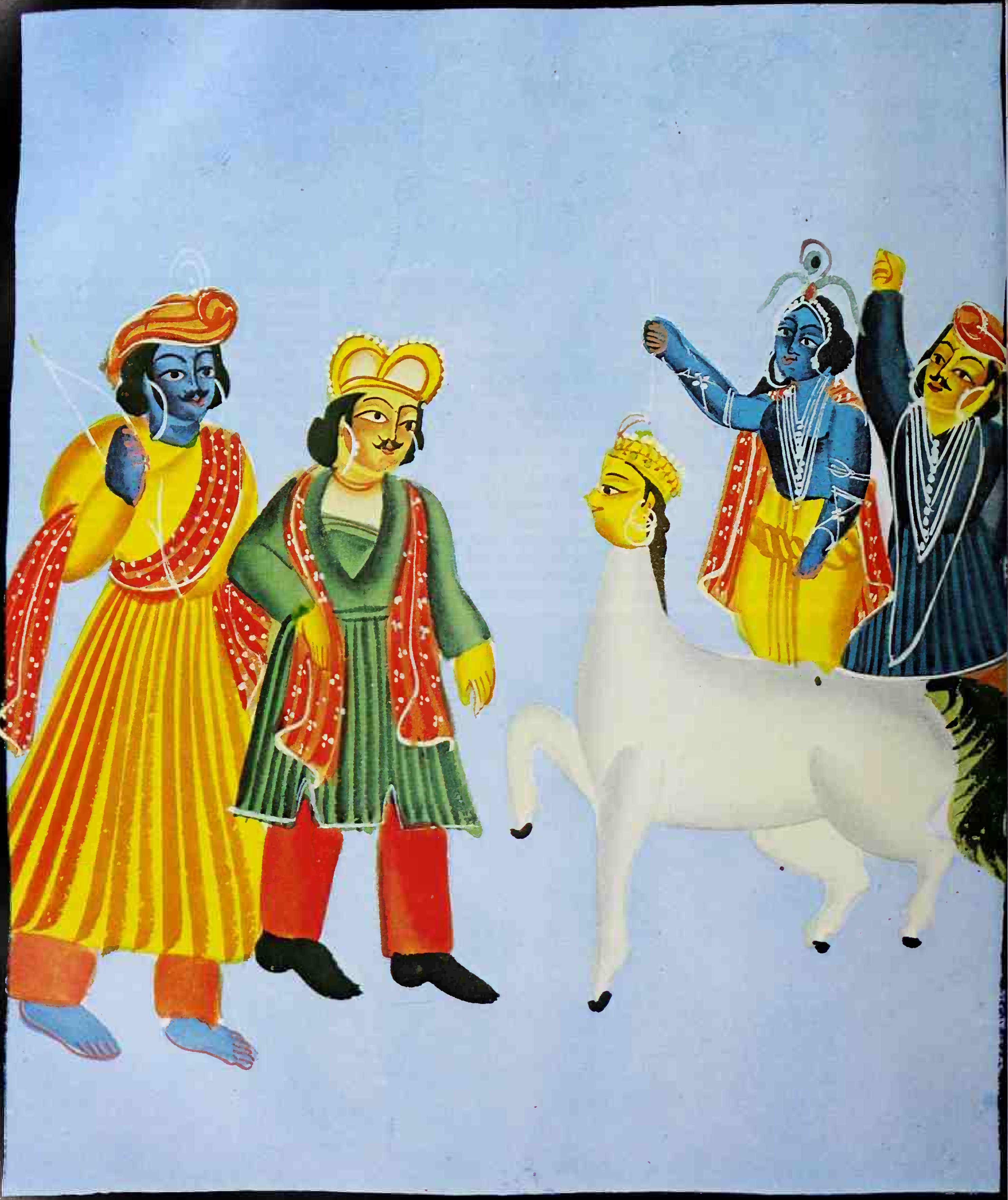
Durham Ritual the aid of Abraham is sought to protect the horse from the powers of darkness, a significant example of the manner in which Christian ideology became permeated by pagan concepts. The ever-popular horse brasses in the shapes of suns, crescent moons, hearts and swastikas, among other symbols, were originally worn as a form of defence against the Evil Eye, to which the horse was thought to be peculiarly susceptible.

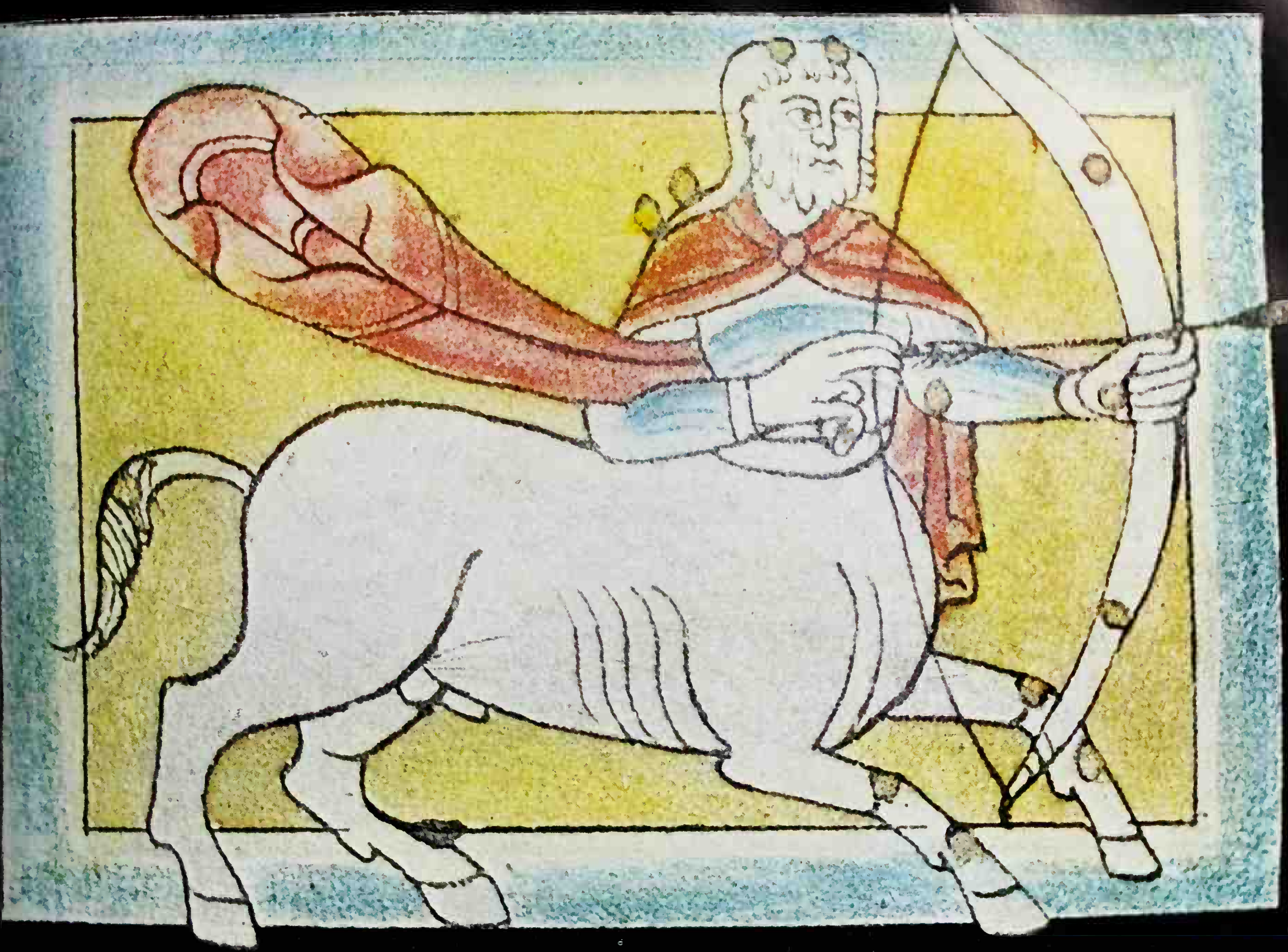
The horse played a part in European fertility rites. The character of the Hodening Horse, a man disguised in a white sheet and horse's head who trots around Kent villages at Christmas and All Souls' Day, and the Welsh custom of the Mari Lwyd involving a horse skull (possibly a relic of Roman horse sacrifice), probably survive from fertility rituals. In many May Day festivals the hobby-horse plays a prominent role, the best known of which is the Padstow Horse which dominates the local Spring rites (see HOBBY-HORSE). In primitive communities such as those of the North American Indians, the horse dance was sometimes performed as a rite to emphasize the importance of the horse to the tribe.

Phantom Horses

Over the centuries the sharper outlines of the old divine myths have sometimes become blurred, overlapping into traditional ghost lore. There are innumerable tales of phantom horses which often pull ghostly coaches along lonely country roads. In Devon the ghost of Sir Francis Drake still drives his horrific black hearse pulled by headless horses. At Wyecollar Hall near Colne and at Loughton, Essex, the phantom horsemen gallop down their respective beats; the last being Dick Turpin, the infamous highwayman with the ghost of the woman he murdered clinging to his back. There are also many fascinating legends of phantom horses and riders who sleep through the centuries within caverns buried deep in the hillsides, ready to gallop forth at the clarion call of invasion in defence of their native lands. An interesting example of the fusion of ghost and elemental was the phantom white horse which was once observed at Oxwich, Glamorgan, walking upon its hind legs and then disappearing into the churchyard well. Until about 50

National Gallery London





Bodleian Library Colour Filmstrip

The horse of King Dundhi *(left)*, a fabulous creature of Indian mythology, like the zodiac sign Sagittarius *(above)*, is depicted as a horse with a human head. The mounted archer also appears in Greek mythology as the centaur

years ago a phantom woman riding through the skies on a white horse could be seen at Mayland in Essex, if one looked through the branches of a certain oak tree.

Horses reputedly possess certain clairvoyant powers of their own which enable them to perceive otherwise invisible intruders from the spirit world. They are notorious for obstinately halting at haunted crossroads, quite unresponsive to the proddings of spur or whip, and there are cases where horses have refused to pass a spot where it afterwards transpired that a funeral was to pass that day. According to the ancient system of divination from horses known as hippomancy, the Celts made their sacred horses walk in procession behind a chariot and ascertained the future from its movements. Germanic priests drew inferences from the carefully observed manner in which their divine horses emerged from the temples; if they advanced right foot first the omen was favourable, while the left was unfavourable. Well into modern times the horse continued to play a modified role in rustic divination. In some places it is still considered lucky to meet a white horse, while in others it is unlucky. A once common ritual was the custom of spitting and making a wish on seeing a white horse and crossing the fingers until a dog was seen. A similar superstition was applied to piebald horses.

Until the early years of the present century, and still surviving in some country places, there was an elite class of horse-handlers known as 'Whisperers', whose members were supposed to exercise an uncanny power over horses. This mysterious art, which was known also in America, enabled the handler not only to tame the most intractable of animals but to paralyse its movements if he so desired – in other words, apparently to bewitch it. According to a recent investigation of this practice by George Ewart Evans, the Whisperers' power was due not to witchcraft, to which it was commonly imputed, but to a shrewd understanding of horse psychology and physiology, certain secret aromatic oils being used to halt or attract the animals.

The magic of the horse has had its influence upon both interior and exterior domestic architecture. Attached to the gable ends of German houses the horse's head served as a defensive charm against evil spirits, while horse skulls were often employed as household amulets.

Many eccentric theories in folklore survive in either direct or indirect examples of the supposed magical power of the horse, such as the belief that horse hairs placed round the neck cure goitre, or inserted in a sandwich will banish worms in children, or again, if left in water the hairs will become transformed into eels. John Wesley, who was interested in folk remedies, recommended as a cure for cancer an infusion of dried and powdered horse spurs (the callosities on the inside of the horse's leg) in warm milk and ale. Pennsylvania Germans attempted to free their children from witchcraft by passing them through a horse-collar.

Many horse superstitions are still religiously observed by horsemen. To change the name of a horse, it is thought, changes its luck. It is still a common practice when entering a horse for a show to mutter 'break a leg' as a prophylactic charm against the hostile intervention of the jealous gods. To dream of a white horse is an omen of death in some places in Britain, but generally the horse that appears in a dream is a good sign and understandably so, since it is the traditional friend and servant of mankind.

(See also CENTAUR; HORSESHOE.)

ERIC MAPLE

FURTHER READING: Arthur Vernon, *History and Romance of the Horse* (Gale, 1975); M. Oldfield Howey, *The Horse in Magic and Myth* (Folcroft, 1979).

HORSESHOE

THE IRON HORSESHOE has a long history as a lucky charm in most countries where horses are used. Many suggestions have been made as to the reasons for this. Blacksmiths working with iron, the magic metal, and employing that mysterious substance fire, were thought to possess supernatural powers (see SMITH). Also, the iron shoe was enhanced by its close association with the horse, worshipped in early times as a sacred animal (see HORSE). Other authorities have found a relationship between the horseshoe and the crescent moon, which it resembles in shape.

Today, as a popular emblem of good luck, it is a familiar sight on greeting cards and wedding-cakes. But to our ancestors it was a powerful protection against the malice of witches and evil spirits: 'Your wife's a witch, man; you should nail a horseshoe on your chamber door,' remarks one of the characters in Walter Scott's novel *Redgauntlet*. John Aubrey, describing habits of the 17th century, said: 'A Horseshoe nailed on the threshold of the door is yet in fashion. The end of it is to prevent the power of Witches, that come into your house.' It is believed unlucky to nail a horseshoe upside down.

The guardian horseshoe, made of iron and shaped like the new moon, has hung on stable and other doors for centuries to bring good luck and general prosperity

Awarded the sovereignty of Egypt over his rival Seth by a divine tribunal, Horus became the preeminent Egyptian god; he is represented in mythology in many different guises and roles

HORUS

AS THE ROYAL and national god of ancient Egypt, Horus enjoyed a position of such importance that no great national rite or festival was celebrated without giving him a prominent place. The great temple at Edfu belonged to him. In form he was a falcon – the peregrine falcon, fiercest of all the birds of prey in the Egyptian sky. His name means 'he who is on high' or 'the distant one' and refers to his domain as a sky god.

Horus was identified with the living Pharaoh and from the 1st Dynasty onwards the Pharaoh called himself Horus (with other names). In the Cairo Museum there is a beautiful statue of King Chephren of the 5th Dynasty which shows Horus stretching out his wings protectively behind the king's head, recalling the Old Testament phrase 'in the shadow of Thy wings'.

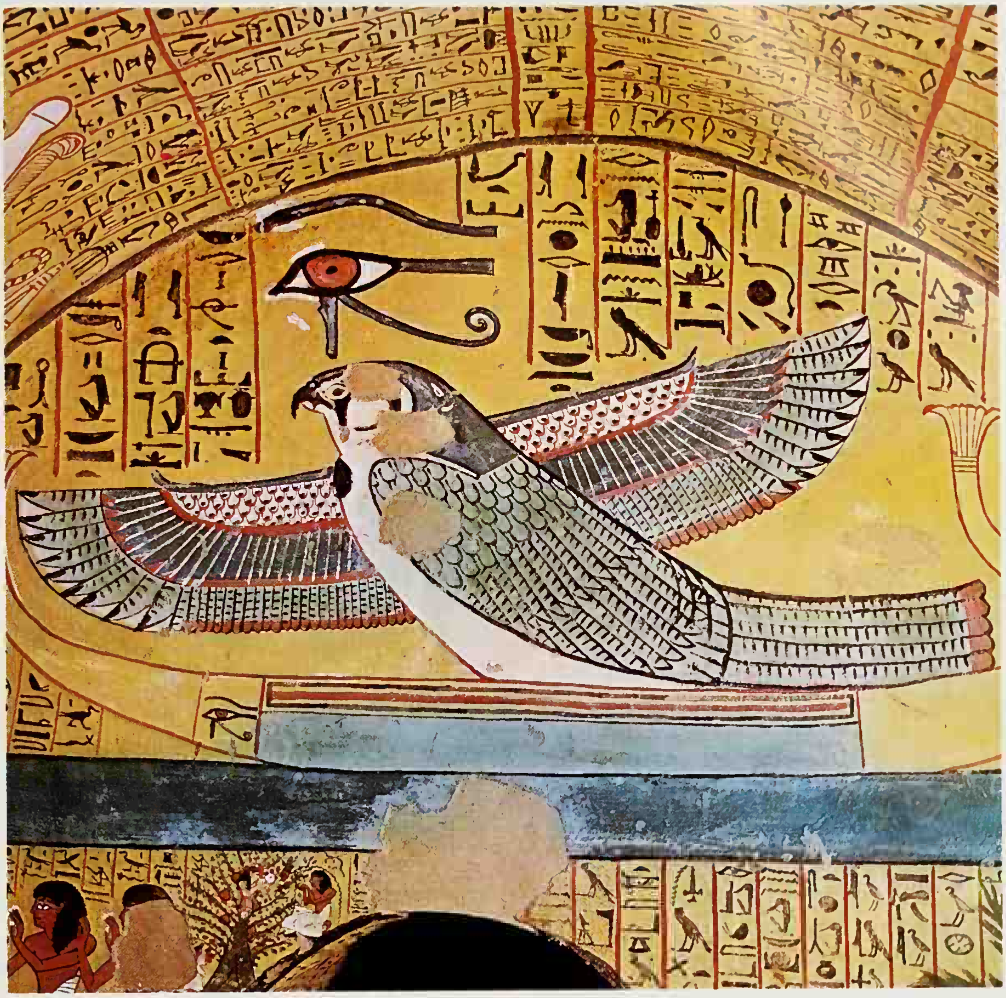
Horus was the leading god of the confederation of clans or tribes which secured sovereignty over the whole of Egypt when the kingdom was established. The Horus confederation was apparently opposed, in the final predynastic struggle for Egypt, by a league under the aegis of the god Seth (see SETH), a canine deity whose home was in Upper Egypt. The political strife which resulted in the unity of Egypt was reflected in the mythological conflict of Horus and Seth, although other explanations have been offered. According to the myth, Horus and Seth were feuding brothers, who inflicted frightful wounds on each other. Seth tore out an eye of Horus and devoured it, while Horus castrated Seth. A trial ensued before a divine tribunal, in which Horus was vindicated and awarded the legitimate sovereignty of Egypt.

Horus and Seth Reconciled

There are suggestions that the god Thoth had tried to intervene in the quarrel in a reconciling role although he sometimes appears as a helper of Horus, especially as the god who restored to him his lost eye, and more rarely as one who sympathized with Seth. A tradition of reconciliation is reflected in the symbolism of Egypt's dynastic unity, for while Horus is the victorious deity who is incorporated in the personality of the Pharaoh, the two gods are shown co-operating for the king's benefit in the ceremony of the 'Baptism of Pharaoh'. The king's jubilee festival (called the *Sed*) concluded with a procession to the chapels of Horus and Seth, and in the purification of 'baptism' of the king the two gods are shown pouring water over the Pharaoh's head.

Michael Holford/Abbey Museum

The falcon god Horus was identified with the living Pharaoh. Horus the child on the lap of his mother Isis is a common motif in Egyptian art and the early iconography of the Madonna and Child owes something to this pagan tradition: bronze statuette c600 BC



A sacred bird to the ancient Egyptians, the falcon was particularly associated with Horus the sky god as a terrifying bird of prey dominating the Egyptian: Horus on a plinth from the Tomb of the Nobles, at the ancient city of Thebes

Sue Gooders

Similarly, in the ceremony of 'Uniting the Two Lands', the symbolic plants of Upper and Lower Egypt, the reed and the papyrus, were joined by the two deities; Horus being associated here with Lower Egypt. Again, the stolen eye of Horus which was healed and restored was symbolic of the crown. In a royal context, therefore, the ceremony of presenting the eye suggested that the sovereign power of the king had been confirmed. Early on, the myth of Horus was merged with that of Osiris (see OSIRIS); the reason for the merger was the double identification of the king. When he died he became Osiris, but as a living Pharaoh he had been Horus. From this divine doubling followed a transfer of the conflict to Osiris. If Seth had been the enemy of Horus, he was now the enemy of Osiris, and the myth maintained that Seth had murdered Osiris. In the early Horus myth the mother of Horus was Hathor, and his father was Geb. Now Isis becomes his mother, Osiris his father, Seth his nephew, and a new Horus emerges – Horus the child.

Horus the Child

Horus the child (called Harpocrates by the Greeks) gradually assumed an important place in mythology. Many stories were told about his childhood, when he was nursed by Isis or by a foster-mother in the papyrus swamps of the Delta and defended by his mother's magic against the wicked onslaughts of Seth. It will be recalled that Moses too was a babe hidden in the bulrushes, and the legend of Horus may well have influenced the Biblical episode. Among the misfortunes inflicted on Horus the child was the homosexual attack made on him by Seth; the first version of this appears in a Middle Kingdom papyrus, and it tells of the unavailing efforts of Isis to prevent the assault. Seth also attacks Horus in various unpleasant insect and animal forms; Horus may be bitten and injured, but he is healed by the magic of Isis his mother. A curious feature of the childhood legends is that they also tell of a disagreement between Horus and Isis. One version described Horus and Seth fighting in the form of hippopotami in a river. Isis expresses feelings in favour of Seth, whereupon Horus cuts off his mother's head; one source adds that Thoth restored it as a cowhead. According to the *Book of the Dead* the hands of Horus were cut off and thrown into the water through a magical curse uttered by his mother. In a few sources the episode takes a sexual form and Horus violates his mother. Mother-incest has been attributed to the Egyptian idea of kingship, with Isis being regarded as mother and wife of the Horus-Pharaoh.

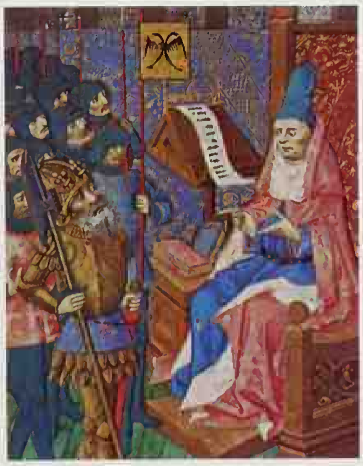
Horus the child on the lap of his mother Isis forms a well-known group in Egyptian art, and the early iconography of the Madonna and Child owes something to the pagan tradition. Christian art was influenced by representations of Horus the fighter on horseback. Certainly the evolution of St George and the Dragon owes something to the way in which Horus was shown attacking the Sethian crocodile.

Horus as the ancient sky god maintained his later status only by a process of assimilation to the cult of another heavenly god, the sun god Re. Egyptian religion teems with theological 'take-over-bids' of this kind. The composite name thus evolved was Re-Horakhty (Re-Horus-of-the-horizon), and the amalgam was expressed in art by a falcon with the sun-disc on his head.
(See also EGYPT; EYE)

J. GWYN GRIFFITHS

Hospitallers

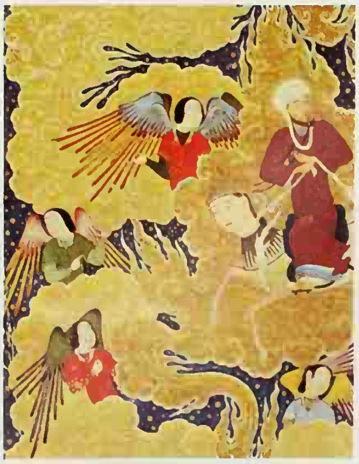
Or Knights of the Order of the Hospital of St John in Jerusalem. Originally a religious order founded in the late 11th century to assist pilgrims going to Jerusalem, they evolved also into a great military order. They moved to Rhodes in the 14th century and to Malta in 1520, surviving there until the arrival of Napoleon in 1798.
See PARADISE



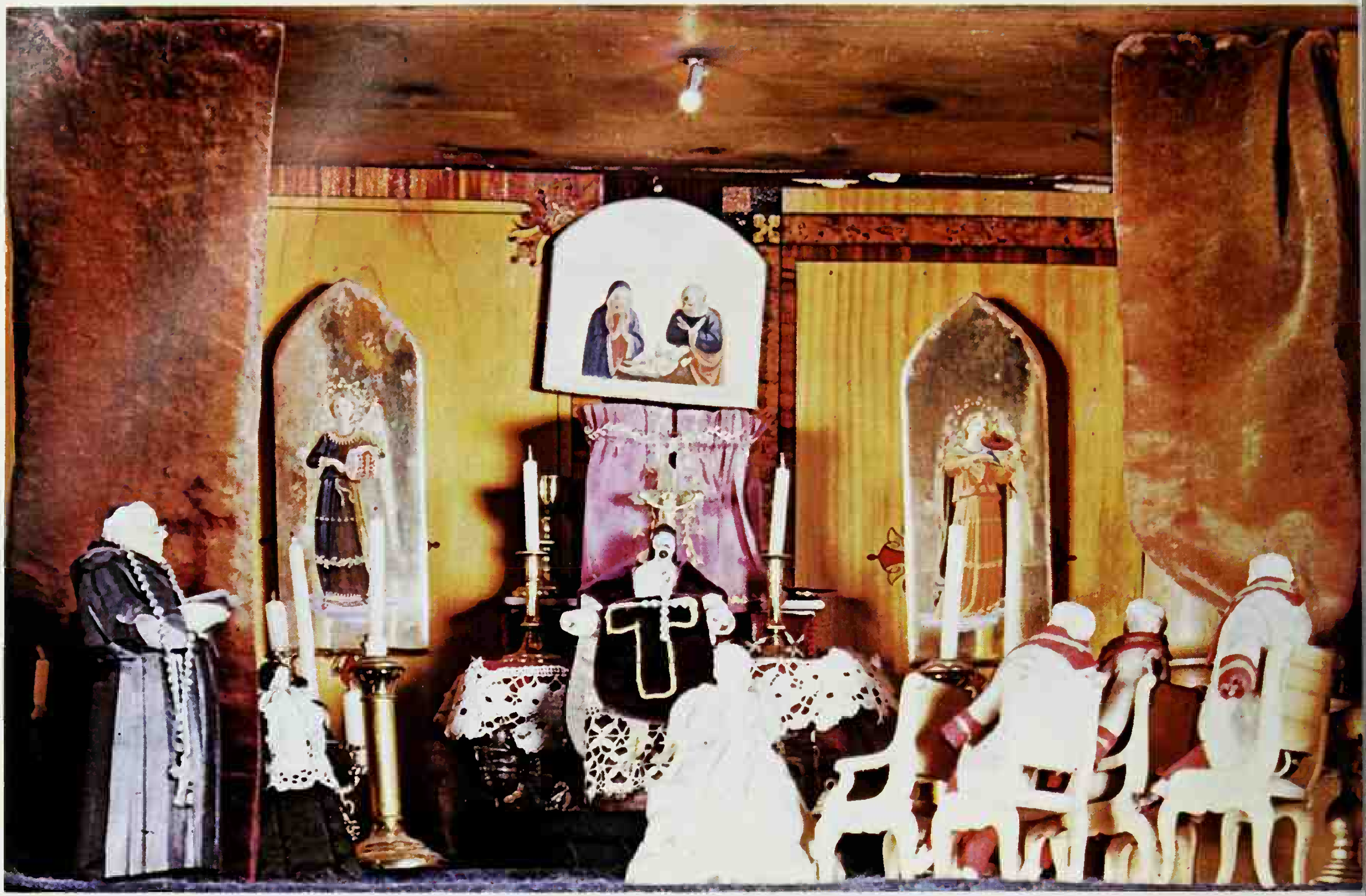
British Museum

Houri

The name of the beautiful black-eyed virgins who inhabit the Islamic paradise: according to the Koran, each believer who is admitted to heaven after death is allotted 72 houris who minister to his needs. They were originally considered purely spiritual beings.
See DAYS AND HOURS.



Ministry of Public Building & Works



In symbolism the house has a female character and, because it is a secret enclosure, it is said to be the repository of all wisdom; in the interpretation of dreams it represents security. In fact, the house has been a symbol of safety and comfort ever since prehistoric times when man sheltered in his cave from the dangers of untamed Nature, and as with other children's games, playing with dolls' houses is partly a magical imitation of grown-up life

Previous page Part of the Currie doll's house, built in 1874, and (*above*) the private chapel on the second floor of this miniature house: in Bethnal Green Museum

Facing page The song 'Home, Sweet Home' sums up man's attitude to the place in which he lives: Victorian bookmark in the Victoria & Albert Museum

HOUSE

Many of the magical practices surrounding the house were aimed at keeping evil spirits, or the elements, at bay; window blind bobbins shaped like acorns are a relic of the belief that the oak, sacred tree of the thunder god, could protect a house from lightning

THE EARLIEST HOUSE was probably erected to shelter the helpless infant from the cold and was designed as an imitation of the lairs and burrows of wild animals. Almost certainly the most primitive forms of architecture were based on Nature, whether in the form of tree branches thatched to provide protection against rain and sun or the chieftain's grave, which was so often a mound that was the replica of the green hills of the countryside.

In the cold North the prehistoric cave was man's first home, usually selected because it faced in a westerly direction to avoid the biting east wind of winter. The cave entrance must have been of immense physical and psychological import from the beginning for it provided not only the means of egress and ingress but was the way of entry for the elemental powers of Nature – light, wind, rain and sun. Within the cave there could be security, warmth and relaxation while outside lurked the dangers of untamed Nature, often in the demonic shapes with which mankind peopled the realms of darkness. It is perhaps understandable that the recesses of the cave should have been dedicated to religious rites and that cave art provided perhaps our earliest experience of abstract form (see CAVE ART; CAVES).

With the development of more sophisticated types of habitation – firstly the stone house on the hillside and later the log hut in the valley – the house must have become ever more important socially, for the more widely one's awareness of the world develops, the more intense are the terrors it excites, and it is only within four walls that man can be completely insulated emotionally against the enervating and destructive power of fear. At a later stage still came the hall, a single-storied, unpartitioned room with the hearth at its centre, the entrance or threshold of which provided a barrier separating the known from the unknown.

In symbolism a house is expressed as an

The house with its storeys doors and windows has been seen as a psychic projection of the human body with its various layers and apertures

enclosed space and also as a receptacle which, like the chest and the womb, is female in character. As a secret enclosure it also symbolizes the repository of all wisdom. There are mystics who have seen in a house, with its storeys, doors and windows, a psychic projection of the human body with its various layers and apertures. It is certain that the sophisticated symbolists of our present age have endowed the house with qualities that would have been inconceivable before the development of psychoanalysis, as for example in the interpretation of dreams in which it is said to represent the different layers of the psyche.

As a further extension of the same theme, the exterior of the house is said to symbolize the human personality, the roof representing the mind and the subconscious being relegated to the basement. The kitchen becomes 'the laboratory of psychic transmutation', echoing Paracelsus's definition of the belly as 'the grand laboratory'.

While such philosophical speculations would have been beyond the comprehension of the ancestral house-owner, it is evident that certain abstract qualities were never far from his mind when he erected his home, since the whole process of building continued to be associated with elaborate magico-religious rites until comparatively modern times. The selection, orientation and layout of the site was determined by augury, for any false alignment in relation to the sun could cast a blight upon the future.

Psychic Household Insurance

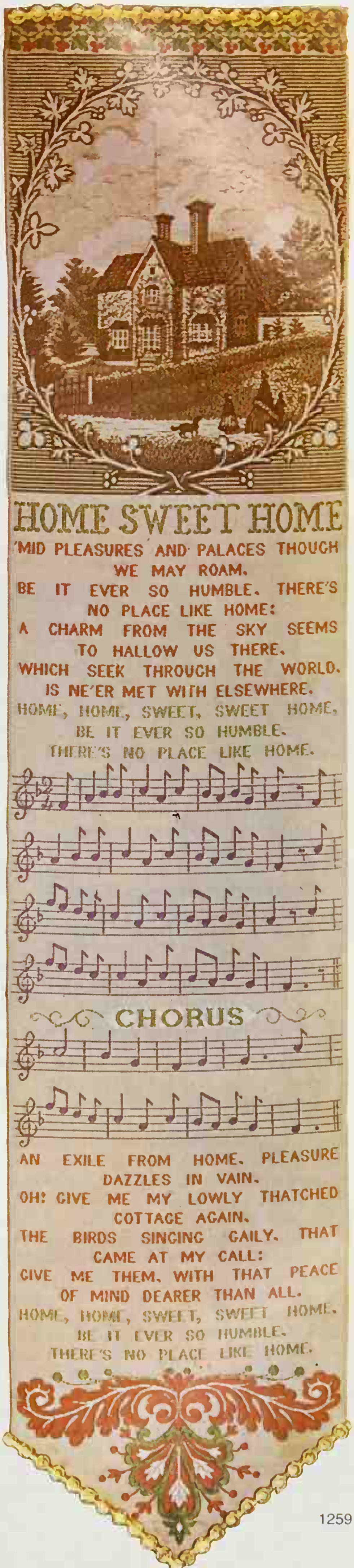
The foundations of households in old-world Europe were customarily 'laid in blood', the sacrificial rite devised to neutralize the enmity of the earth deity and to ensure the stability of the structure in accordance with primitive architectural theory (see BUILDERS' RITES). As a relic of this old practice, the superstition is still common in the North of England that the building or rebuilding of a house or the cutting of a new doorway results in the death of one member of the family. A further reminder of the custom of burying human victims alive beneath a cornerstone is provided by the superstition that corner houses are unlucky places in which to live.

Originally it would have been necessary for any new building to be consecrated by a priest before it could be occupied, to provide ritual protection against demons and ghosts. In the Celebes, in Indonesia, the most elaborate ceremonies were carried out even in modern times to protect those who entered their new homes from the psychic dangers within, and in many lands including Persia and China offerings were always made to the protective spirits before entering a house. A comparable superstitious practice is still observed by those of Anglo-Saxon stock in northern Europe and America who carry bread and salt into a new house to ensure the prosperity of the occupants.

The belief still prevails in many parts of Europe that a newly completed house should be placed under the protection of a lucky tree or bush, and as a further insurance against the attacks of hostile spirits the houseleek, a plant dedicated to Thor, is sometimes grown upon roofs (see HOUSELEEK). As an additional insurance with the household deities human and animal skulls were used as magical amulets, and were sometimes embedded in walls, those of the horse being particularly favoured in northern Europe.

The main defence of the house against intruders of all kinds consisted of the wall, which has been described as a 'restrictive force that kept out prying eyes and enemies'. Infinite care had to be observed in its construction. In Ireland it is still considered dangerous to build part of a gravestone into a new wall as this 'builds death into the house'.

The window or 'wind eye', originally a mere hole in the wall protected by branches or a curtain and exposed to the wind, in symbolism represents the idea of penetration; if situated at the summit of a tower it becomes the symbol of consciousness. In addition the window opens the inner darkness to the holy power of light. It is said that some primitive communities worshipped the first ray of the sun when it reached the window. In Ireland a cup of milk is placed on the sill as refreshment for the wandering family ghosts who chance to pass that way at Christmas time. The entry of an alien spirit by way of the window could be prevented by suspending a witch ball, a multi-coloured glass sphere, near the opening, where it distracted the eye of the approaching witch and was thought to absorb the first impact of her venom.



HOME SWEET HOME
'MID PLEASURES AND PALACES THOUGH
WE MAY ROAM,
BE IT EVER SO HUMBLE, THERE'S
NO PLACE LIKE HOME:
A CHARM FROM THE SKY SEEMS
TO HALLOW US THERE,
WHICH SEEK THROUGH THE WORLD,
IS NE'ER MET WITH ELSEWHERE.
HOME, HOME, SWEET, SWEET HOME,
BE IT EVER SO HUMBLE,
THERE'S NO PLACE LIKE HOME.

AN EXILE FROM HOME, PLEASURE
DAZZLES IN VAIN,
OH! GIVE ME MY LOWLY THATCHED
COTTAGE AGAIN,
THE BIRDS SINGING GAILY, THAT
CAME AT MY CALL:
GIVE ME THEM, WITH THAT PEACE
OF MIND DEARER THAN ALL.
HOME, HOME, SWEET, SWEET HOME,
BE IT EVER SO HUMBLE,
THERE'S NO PLACE LIKE HOME.

Sweetening the Kitchen God

On the 24th comes the sacrifice to the Tsao Wang or Kitchen God, who is one of the oldest of the household deities . . . In the household he plays a dual role, for he not only looks after the hearth, but has constituted himself the censor of morals of the family. He is the connecting link between God and Man and, seven days before the New Year, he is despatched to make his annual report. Where officials are concerned it is axiomatic in China that every man has got his price, and the Kitchen God is no exception to the rule. The family, whose record is about to be laid before the All Highest, makes every effort to ensure that a favourable report shall be rendered. As a rule, the effigy of the Tsao Wang occupies a small bamboo or wooden shrine, and he is depicted with his horse beside him. On the night of his departure incense is burned, and some straw, or in the North, kao-liang, is ignited by the stove as forage for the steed's journey. A bowl of water is also poured out by the stove. A special sticky sweetmeat, named T'ang Kua, is part of the sacrifice, and a portion is burned with the picture of the god. This is to ensure that he will only say sweet things, but it is not unusual to make certain of his silence by smearing his mouth with opium, or steeping the effigy in wine, to render him drowsy or fuddled when he reaches the end of his journey. He then risks expulsion for drunkenness before he can get a word in with the Jade Emperor and, as the family is free from his surveillance for seven days, they are indifferent as to how he spends his time.

V. R. Burkhardt
Chinese Creeds and Customs

The threshold of the house has always been an important centre of household rites as it is essentially a barrier against the enemy without, whether human or elemental. In mysticism the doorway, the place of 'comings and goings', represents the free will, while its archway has long been the site of purificatory rites and ritual healing. Specially devised ceremonies, often involving sacrifice, were performed at the threshold of the house to propitiate the household or guardian spirits and to protect the family from evil. There are many who even today believe that it is unlucky to enter a new house for the first time by the back door, which is in effect an unconsecrated aperture, or to leave a house by a different door from the one at which one came in.

In biblical times the threshold or gateway was the scene of mystical ceremonies as in Exodus (chapter 12) where we read that the blood of a lamb, sprinkled on the lintels and doorposts of the Israelites' houses, protected them when God killed the first-born of Egypt. After the erection of the principal entrance to an Indian building the woodwork is even today ritually anointed with the oil of the sandal-tree. The sacrosanct character of the house imposed many prohibitions upon those who entered it, including the need to avoid any contact between the foot and the threshold; in the Orient, for instance, visitors remove their shoes. The sanctity of the doorway is further emphasized by the inscriptions that traditionally appear above it. These may vary from the sacred to the profane, and in the Far East are often obscene. In parts of North Africa the genitalia of animals are set above barn doorways as a warning to the passing demon. An interesting feature of some older English houses is the stone carving of a woman's head that can often be seen placed above the doorway. The grotesquely designed door knockers on old English cottages also served to warn off devils, as did the horseshoes that were nailed to the doorways of barns.

To certain gods and goddesses have been allocated the task of supervising the threshold of the house, and altars were erected near the entrances in their honour. The Roman Janus (see JANUS), god 'of the beginning of things', is perhaps the best known deity of gates and doors and his name is related to our modern 'janitor'.

The symbolism of the door key pervades mythology and religion, for whether it is expressed as the key of heaven or as the key to wisdom, it is the symbol of entrance to the mysteries. For this reason priests and priestesses of the ancient religions carried keys as evidence that they were participants in the rites of the gods. Even in the modern world the key is of great symbolic importance, and to welcome an honoured guest by handing him the keys of the city is in effect to offer him open house.

The keyhole represents a chink in the armour of the household, an aperture by which the devils may enter and it must therefore be rendered secure; however, if the key is left in the lock the home is safe. Many people once believed that stopping the keyhole was extremely important during childbirth to prevent fairies from stealing the baby, and that this action also barred the terrifying evil spirit known as the nightmare from entering the house.

In the past, certain special actions performed with a strict eye to magic were involved in entering or leaving a house, some of which remain part of contemporary folklore. The new bride is still carried over the threshold when she enters her home for the first time, while stumbling at the threshold must be avoided if one is embarking upon a journey. Until recently it was customary in Devon to scrub the bride's footprints from the front doorstep of her parental home after her departure as a sign that she had left her old house and had chosen another.

Ladder to the Gods

The various rooms of a house are said to be symbols of individuality; a closed room without windows is an obvious symbol of virginity. The stairway, leading upwards and downwards to unite the various floors, symbolizes the principle of ascension, graduation and communication between different levels of the personality. This however is little more than a reiteration of the old folk theme that steps and ladders provide a mode of ascension to the land of the gods. For this reason it is considered unlucky to pass someone on the stairs, since he could well be a god in human shape who would resent the presence of a mortal on his sacred territory. There is a pleasant domestic rite still observed in many places in which a baby is carried to the top of the stairs on its first journey, in the belief that it should 'go up in the world before it comes down'. Superstitious flat-dwellers have been known to resort to a step-ladder for the same purpose, so tenacious is this old tradition in our midst. (See also STEPS AND LADDERS.)

The furnishings of the rooms are included in the magical framework; a change in the clock's rhythm being a death omen, especially if it should strike 13. Sleeping has its magic rites, for the bed should face east-west in alignment with the sun, or otherwise the sleeper will suffer from nightmares. New shoes must never be placed on the table as this brings death upon the household, a superstition doubtless arising from the old custom of placing a new pair of shoes on the feet of a corpse. In East Anglia it is considered a sign that a visitor will never enter the house again if he should stand his chair against the wall before leaving the house. A falling picture is an omen that a member of the household will die, especially if it is his portrait, while three knocks on the window, or the presence of crows encircling the roof, is advance intimation to the householder that he would be wise to keep his life insurance up to date.

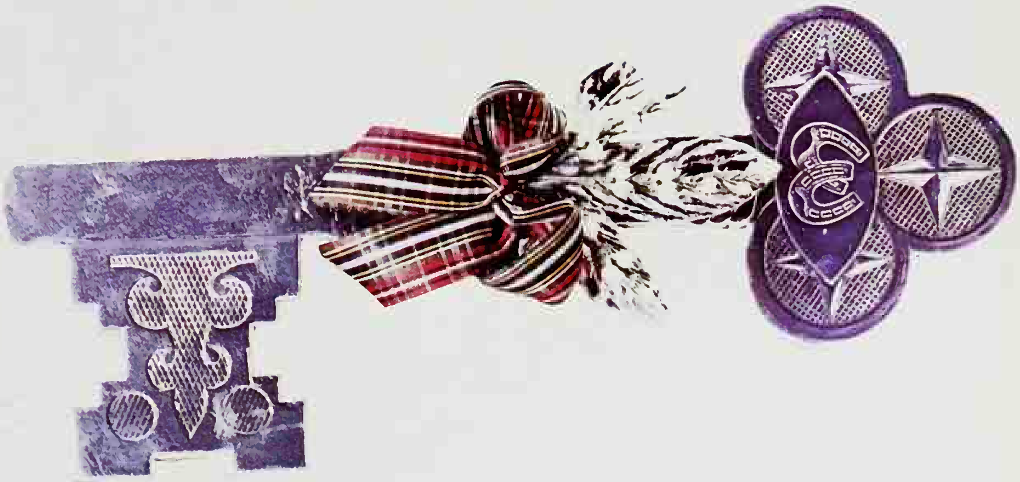
Death in the Home

Although a house may be protected by magical and religious rites from the assaults of external spirit forces it is, paradoxically, the abode of domestic elementals who have one common feature in that they are capricious, troublesome, hard to please, and even spiteful. The household spirit is known as the boggart, brownie, fairy, goblin or kobold, according to nationality. The kobold was a common feature of English domestic life and as long ago as the 12th century a house-kobold caused a considerable stir at the Suffolk home of Sir Osborn de Bradwelle by discussing learnedly in Latin 'on Scriptural subjects'. A Danish kobold advanced further in this field, ultimately becoming clerk to an archbishop. Promotion from domestic spirit to the higher ecclesiastical ranks was rare, however, and in the main the kobold was restricted to passing the time by playing tricks upon the household; hiding farm equipment and consuming considerable quantities of food. Today the last relics of kobold lore have been reduced to a vague belief in lucky and unlucky houses possessing happy or unhappy atmospheres.

Innumerable are the magical rites

United Press International

The key, the instrument which unlocks the door to the house, has always been of great symbolic importance; in ancient religions and mythology it represented entrance to the mysteries, and even today to hand an honoured guest the keys of a city is, in effect, to offer him open house *Above* Tunku Abdul Rahman, Prime Minister of Malaysia, receiving the Freedom of the City of London *Right* A 21st birthday key, symbolically opening the door to adult status and responsibilities



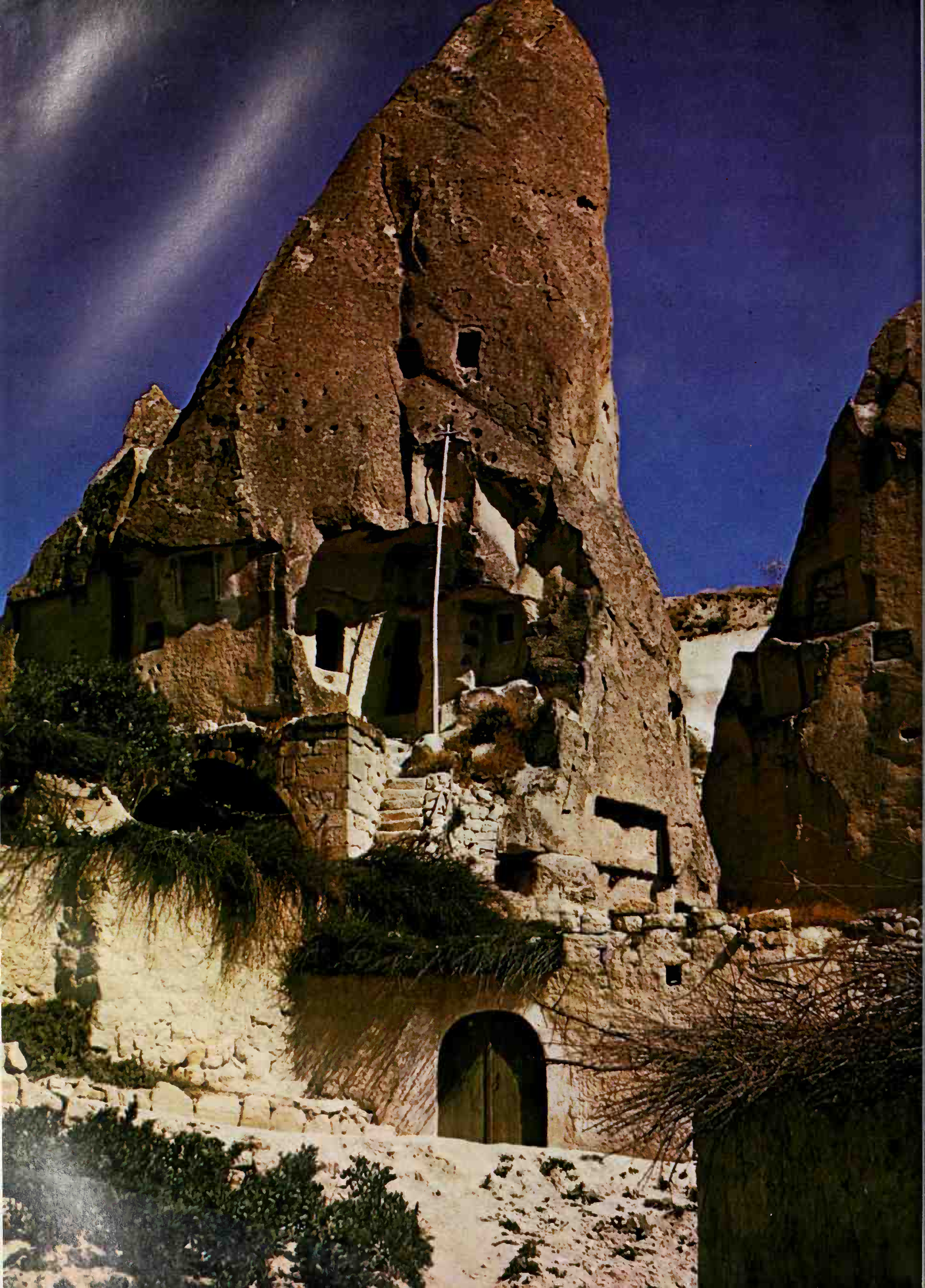
Mark Gerson

associated with the interior of the house, which were once employed as protection against evil. People with some unusual feature or defect such as red hair, cross-eyes or whose eyebrows met across the nose, were never permitted to cross the threshold as they were either bad luck bringers, witches or involuntary possessors of the Evil Eye. A witch who entered the house immediately acquired power over its occupants; she could be kept from the threshold, however, by secreting a pair of scissors or a knife beneath the doormat, for like all enemies of good she was unable to step over cold iron.

It is in matters connected with death that the magic of the house is most apparent. When one of the family is due to pass over, according to tradition, the family ghosts discreetly return and await the reunion. If the dying are not to suffer a 'hard death' the death-bed must be in alignment with the floorboards and never across them. An older superstition held that if pigeons' feathers were used to stuff the mattress the death agonies might be prolonged indefinitely. Immediately after death all the mirrors in the room were covered lest the soul in its departure (which had previously been facilitated by the opening of every door and window in the house) should snatch at a mourner's reflection and bear it away to keep it company in the afterlife.

The old belief that a house might in some mysterious manner become 'impregnated' by death has often taken strange forms. For example, the Kamchadales of north-east Asia abandoned the cabins in which members of the tribe had died. There are many who fear to live in a house of death believing this to be an open invitation for the spirit of death to embrace the living. In some primitive communities this morbid terror has been responsible for houses being burnt down as a purificatory rite, following a death.

It seems that none of the elaborate precautions undertaken to guard the threshold from evil spirits provides adequate protection against the return of the family ghost. At one time a room would be shut up after a death, often for years on end; the 18th century essayist Addison refers to a house as being 'three quarters locked up as haunted'. There appears to be some connection between the common European belief that an empty



Left Caves were regarded as sanctuaries as well as dwelling places, and early Christians sought refuge in ones like these in Turkey *Right* In many parts of the world rites to ensure that evil spirits are neutralized, and that a house will be safe from psychic dangers, are still practised: llama foetuses for sale in Bolivia; they are buried under the foundations of a new building *Right below* Among the Pela-Pela tribe of Dahomey, a man's dwelling place becomes his tomb; he is buried in his hut and his family build themselves a new one

house is an abode of ghosts and the old tradition that after a dwelling has been empty for some time it becomes occupied by devils. In the author's own collection of ghost stories from the North of England is a terrifying legend of a house 'haunted by a pair of eyes'. These had apparently entered the building while it was empty, and finally drove the new tenant insane.

When the family dead choose to return to their old homes they show all the old traits they once possessed as living humans, being either quiet, philosophical and good-tempered, or petulant and vengeful. Sometimes the contest between the dead and the living for the possession of the house becomes so disturbing that an exorcist has to be called in. In Pliny's day houses were 'hallowed' against evil spirits with brimstone. Once the spirit is expelled the house will often remain free of unwelcome intruders of this kind for a considerable time.

Exorcism constitutes possibly the last surviving magico-religious ceremony associated with the house. It appears that there are certain wanton household spirits who do not submit as readily as ghosts to the commands of the exorcist. These are the poltergeists whose activities are closely bound up with the family. The poltergeist has much in common with the old kobold, of whom it is doubtless a direct descendant, being capricious, troublesome and occasionally violent, hurling stones and wrenching bed clothes off people who are sleeping, and occasionally setting a house alight. In the Isle of Man immediately before the Second World War reports of a household elemental in the shape of a talking mongoose created a national sensation. There are few houses as adequately secured against hostile presences from both inside and outside the threshold as Bettiscombe Manor in Dorset, which is protected by a human skull that successfully prevents any evil spirits or ghosts from troubling the tenants.

In dream lore a house is a symbol of security, and to dream of standing outside one indicates a forthcoming change of plans, while to enter the house means a fresh start in life. A house in course of erection symbolizes happiness to come but if it is being pulled down it portends an unhappy love affair. Folktales contain a wealth of lore reflecting the importance of the house in childhood fantasies. This is as it should be for the house began as a sanctuary for the helpless child,

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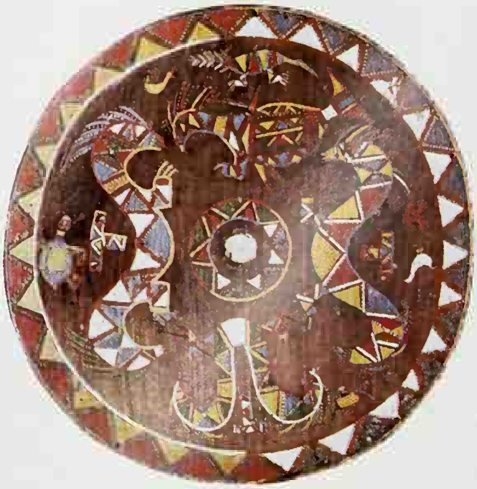

Jorgen Bisch

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The belief that a house must be protected against hostile presences who may wish to enter and harm the occupants still survives in various countries *Far left* A disc inscribed with magical symbols used to decorate the thatched roof of a hut in Malawi in southern Africa. The threshold of a house is essentially a barrier against the enemy without, and the arch of the doorway, the place of 'comings and goings', is traditionally the site of purificatory rites and ritual healing; the doorway's sanctity is often emphasized by inscriptions or carvings: the Mexican door knocker (*left*) is a relic of the belief in the need to warn off evil spirits and demons, as is the grotesque carved figure (*below*) that supports the lintel of a doorway

Peter Goodliffe

only developing into a psychic shrine with the passage of the years.

The garden is in effect part of the precinct, an extension of the house itself; it has been described as a place 'where nature is subdued, ordered, selected and enclosed'. It is here that protective plants and trees were grown for the purpose of providing a first magical barrier against approaching evil. The mountain ash protected the home against witchcraft and the bay withstood the assaults not only of witches but of devils and storms. The plants purslane, pennyroyal and pimpernel were ever potent defenders of the house against devils and misfortune generally.

Certain garden flowers have long been associated with sickness or death and for this reason are rigorously kept from the house. The white lilac is among the most notorious of these flowers, but even the purple and red varieties are said to bring disaster. The lily, perhaps because of its close association with funerals, is considered a death omen, while the white flower of the hawthorn is almost universally excluded from the house since it brings with it tragedy (see HAWTHORN). The glorious daffodil, beloved of the poets, has a more dubious reputation in terms of bad luck and for this reason is banned from the house in some parts of the North of England (see PLANTS AND FLOWERS).

The acorn, on the other hand, the seed of the oak which is the sacred tree of the thunder god, affords protection to both house and home against storms and lightning; it is for this reason that the bobbins on window blind cords are traditionally acorn-shaped. A more positive device for keeping misfortune at bay is to cultivate the visit of bees to the house, since they are not only great luck-bringers but firm friends of domestic harmony. At one time it was the rule to 'tell the bees' of every change in the household or otherwise the whole hive might take umbrage and fly away. The common house spider is also a luck-bringer to any home. 'If you wish to live and thrive, let a spider run alive' is a useful maxim for the superstitious home-lover.

(See also HAUNTED HOUSES; THRESHOLD).

ERIC MAPLE

FURTHER READING: Dorothy Donnelly, *The Golden Well* (Sheed & Ward, 1950).

Michael Holford

HUNTING MAGIC

IN CONTEMPORARY Western societies hunting magic persists in the attenuated form of sporting hunters' and fishermen's use of good luck charms and other common 'superstitious' practices. Among primitive peoples, whose understanding and control of the natural world are relatively rudimentary, but who often depend heavily on hunting and fishing for their sustenance, magic may assume great cultural importance.

Hunting (and fishing) magic in such societies may reflect profound cultural concepts of the essential qualities that distinguish men from animals, and of the complex and delicate relationship between human society and the natural world. Less obviously, the beliefs and practices of hunting magic may indirectly reveal much about the tensions and problems of the societies in which they are found. This is because dependence on such inherently uncertain sources of food poses special problems for simple cultures whose fragile yet rigid social structures are threatened in a variety of ways by fluctuations in the luck of the hunters.

Magic is a means of establishing a personal relationship with an otherwise indeterminately related, unknowable and uncontrollable object or situation, which makes possible effective knowledge or control of that situation. It works by symbolically projecting onto such relationships and situations the orderly, predictable or controllable, yet potent properties of familiar social or natural phenomena. The magical act of symbolic projection thus necessarily relies upon a systematic and logically coherent set of ideas about the relations between the magician, the object of his magic, and the symbolic properties of the substances used in his magic. Magic may take the form of positive action directed toward the achievement of a goal; but magical beliefs may be equally important in a passive or negative sense, as explanations for the occurrence of unfortunate or unusual events, or as rules for the avoidance of certain contacts or associations which would have the effect of frustrating the achievement of a purpose, or bringing about actively harmful consequences.

The natural world, and above all the

animate beings, the birds, animals and fish, that inhabit it, constitute the domain of uncontrollable, unpredictable and unknowable events. They form a mysterious realm beyond the ken or control of the laws of human society. The magic of hunting cannot be understood unless it is realized that the hunt is frequently defined in cultural terms as a kind of rite of passage, a venture out of the safe and secure domain of human society into the ritually perilous, alien world of natural beings.

The structure of the hunt itself resembles that of an initiation ritual. The hunter must first prepare and separate himself from society, then encounter and subdue his prey, which requires him to enter into a relationship with an inhabitant of the asocial, natural world, and finally he must return again to human society. The return is often a ritually complex operation, for in many cultures the hunter cannot become fully reintegrated into the society of men without taking the necessary measures to purify himself of his relationship with his prey, which is magically dangerous because of its asocial, inhuman and hostile qualities, and to protect others from its effects. In some societies, this is achieved simply through the social distribution of the meat; in others, by rites of purification for the hunter; in still others, by ritual treatment of the corpse of the victim. The prey itself undergoes its own rite of passage, a transition from its wholly 'natural' existence, through the stage of contact and slaughter by the hunter, to its complete integration into the human cultural world as cooked food.

Lord of the Animals

Magical rites and beliefs may surround every phase of both hunter's and victim's passage between human society and Nature. The hunter's weapons and auxiliary animals (usually dogs or horses) are also frequent objects of magical treatment. There is, of course, enormous variation from culture to culture as to which aspects of these complex phenomena become the objects of magic, what are the explicit and implicit goals of the magical practices, what constitutes the objective content of the magical rites and beliefs themselves, and what basic ideas underlie them.

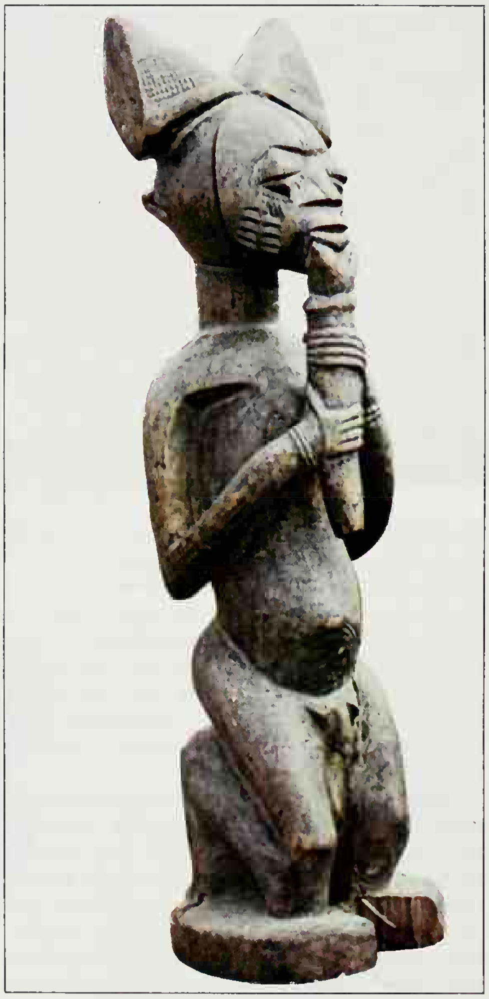
In some cultures, all hunters share knowledge of the important magical techniques; in others, each man may have his own techniques, either learned from others or discovered by himself. In still others, only specialists, shamans or priests possess the requisite knowledge or are able to perform the necessary rituals or provide the requisite medicines or charms. In certain societies, the ritual of hunting magic is performed by an entire band or community, in others by lone individuals. The techniques employed vary widely: they include the use of spells, amulets, charms, shrines and medicines; offerings or sacrifices to the animals themselves, to the divine guardians of the animals, or to the familiars or gods of the hunters.

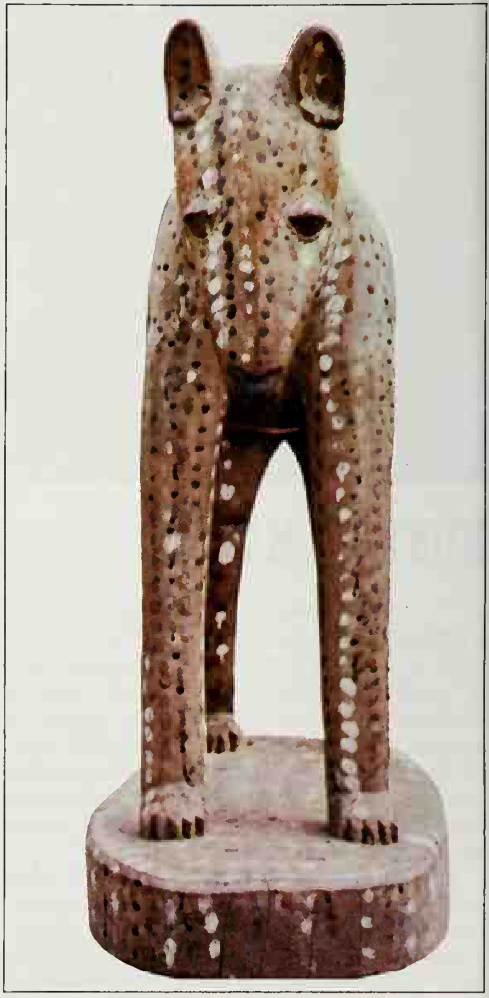
Certain cultures concentrate on producing clairvoyant visions and telepathic or dream communication with the animals, to learn their location or secure their co-operation with the hunter. Others stress the establishment of a special relationship between an individual hunter and a particular species of animal, which may consist in an ability to understand its language, a particular skill in tracking or killing it, or occasionally a compact with that species under the terms of which its members allow themselves to be killed and taken by that hunter. A frequently employed technique is the application of medicines or charms to the weapons and body of the hunter or his dogs. The making and manipulation of representations of the quarry, whether in dance, song, or in art, seems also to have been a common device of hunting magic since Paleolithic times.

Much of the magic associated with hunting is directed at the quarry itself, with varying purposes, such as to cause it to multiply as a species, to locate it and perhaps to induce it to come to the hunter, to pacify it or neutralize its strength if it is dangerous. Hunting magic may also be practised to deceive the animal with respect to the hunter's presence or real intentions toward it, to kill it, to make it lighter so that it can be the more easily carried home, to placate or compensate it for being killed and eaten, to forestall the vengeance of the dead animal's spirit or supernatural patrons or protectors, or to counteract the potentially dangerous effects of contact with its physical substance (it is widely believed that the hair, meat and blood of wild animals has a dangerous 'potency').

Another array of magical practices is concerned with preparing the hunter (through fasting, sexual continence, performance of rites, and so on) for the hunt, in ways calculated to sharpen his powers of tracking and finding the game, his strength, skill and endurance in all phases of the hunt, or perhaps to protect him from attack by his quarry or other wild beasts. Still other techniques are employed for making the hunter invisible or otherwise imperceptible to his quarry, for protecting him from the supernatural danger that may result from his having killed, and purifying him after the kill so that he may be reincorporated into human society.

The concept of the man-animal relationship underlying the practice of hunting magic is often extremely sophisticated and complex, and also varies widely from culture to culture. Many primitive peoples base their beliefs and behaviour toward wild animals on a tacit, or occasionally explicit, assumption





***Previous page* The hunt has been defined as a '. . . rite of passage, a venture out of the safe and secure domain of human society into the ritually perilous, alien world of natural beings'. Before the hunt, it was sometimes considered necessary for the hunter to prepare himself and separate himself from society: Assyrian relief showing winged divine figures anointing King Assurnasirpal before he leaves on a hunting expedition. According to a traditional Nigerian belief, members of a hunting party would be brought together by a tune which was played by the piper who was said to accompany Sango, the hunter god. *Right* Sango's piper and (*far right*) his dog**

of reciprocity and equilibrium between the wild species and themselves. This is frequently expressed by beliefs that animals at one time possessed culture and language, and bestowed their gifts upon man, thereby losing them for themselves.

In some societies, it is thought to be man's responsibility to perform the rituals necessary to insure the renewal and fertility of the animal species: in this way man, through the ritual increase of game species, counterbalances the reduction caused by hunting. There are widespread beliefs in the necessity to apologize to, or otherwise placate, the game animal for taking it, often associated with beliefs in supernatural 'parents' or protectors of animal species who must be placated by the hunter.

In many cases animals are directly linked to notions about human death. Among the Desana of the Colombia-Brazil border, according to Reichel-Dolmatoff, it is believed that the souls of the dead who have led sinful lives are captured by the 'Lord of the Animals' and taken by him to the caves in the mountains which the Desana believe are the 'wombs of the animals', to be reincarnated in animal form. To kill an animal is therefore to kill a man; animals and men share a common kinship of souls, and, as the Desana put it, of blood. A hunter must propitiate the Lord of the Animals, or distract his attention by inducing him to remain slumbering in one of his caverns, if he is to succeed in his quest.

It is tempting to conjecture that the great painted caves of Paleolithic Europe, which are often chambers buried deep in the cliffs or mountains far from the sites of human habitation, and which seem to have been used solely for ceremonial purposes, may have served as 'wombs' of the animal species found painted so vividly on their walls, somewhat along the lines of the Desana conception. Effigies of animals modelled in clay and pierced by spear-thrusts have been found in the caves, lending some support to the conjecture that hunting rituals may have been practised in the caves, but we shall probably never know with certainty what beliefs and rituals were celebrated by the Stone Age hunters in their subterranean sanctuaries (see CAVE ART).

A more extreme example of the belief in the relation of game animals, hunting and human death is reported by Edward Schieffelin from certain New Guinea tribes, who believe in a dual universe. In this system, every human soul has, as a 'double', an animal soul in the 'parallel' world. The souls of the animals of this world are, in the same way, the doubles of the people of the other world. To kill the animal double causes the death of the human counterpart in the complementary world. Human deaths are thus explained as the results of hunting by the men of the other world, and hunts are occasionally organized by the tribes in question to retaliate against the men of the other world for causing deaths by their hunting.

Such beliefs, however bizarre they may seem, reflect a fundamental belief in the interdependence of human and animal life, expressed in the concept that both form parts of a delicately balanced equilibrium which men only upset at their peril. Hunting magic often serves as the vehicle of these ideas, sometimes by imposing significant restrictions on the behaviour of the hunter (such as sexual abstinence) as preconditions of success, or sometimes by more overtly emphasizing the contractual nature of the hunting relationship between man and animal, for instance by requiring reciprocal rites or gestures by the hunter toward the quarry animal or its species.

It would be misleading, however, to interpret such beliefs as being based solely upon an objective grasp of the principles of the balance between human society and the animal populations of its surrounding territory. In simple societies, the concept that is formed of the balance between man and Nature is often tightly bound up with the character of the social relations between man in his role as hunter and his fellow men.

Hunter's 'Luck'

The Brazilian anthropologist Roberto Da Matta, for example, has shown in a brilliant analysis of the magical beliefs about 'bad luck' in hunting and fishing held by the population of a small Brazilian town on the Amazon, how these beliefs tend to maintain the inflexible social structure of the community. The lowest strata of the town's population, the hunters and fishermen, have no means of raising their status in society other than through some 'lucky' contact or event originating outside the social structure of the community itself. This might take the form of help from a distant relative, a generous employer from the big city, or persistent luck in hunting and fishing. This would provide an opportunity for the successful hunter to expand his network of social relations and raise his social standing by distributing presents of meat to those he might wish to put under an obligation.

The hierarchical social structure of the town is, however, too rigid to tolerate such mobility: it depends on maintaining the amount of hunting at a fairly rigidly fixed level, as well as on strictly regulating the distribution of the proceeds of the hunt. The magical beliefs and taboos surrounding the distribution of meat by the hunter are so defined that any man who hunts with unusual frequency and success would be almost sure to violate one, thus bringing 'bad luck' in hunting upon himself. This system of taboos tends to constrain hunters to limit their activities, at the cost of losing their 'luck'. It also tends to inhibit their losing their place in the social structure of the community.

There is a separate system of beliefs in the same town that animal species, watercourses and other natural resources have 'mothers' who permit modest utilization of the resources under their protection but punish 'over-exploitation' beyond the normal subsistence needs of an individual and his immediate family. This set of beliefs, counterparts of which are found in many primitive and peasant societies, obviously has the same social effect as the system of taboos surrounding the distribution of game.

The main point of Da Matta's analysis is that societies with simple but rigid social organizations, like most primitive and rural or peasant communities, may attempt to restrict their relations with the natural world (above all, hunting) within narrowly prescribed limits of quantity and quality, in order to protect their inflexible social structures from the repercussions that would result from uncontrolled individual variation in hunting productivity.

Those that do not attempt to regulate hunting production frequently surround the distribution of the meat with taboos tending to ensure equitable sharing, in this way minimizing the danger of conflicts arising from discriminatory distribution and inequalities in hunting luck and skill among individual hunters. For a rigidly structured simple society, natural equilibrium (including the equitable distribution of natural produce) is the prerequisite of social equilibrium. Magical beliefs, as Da Matta shows, may fulfil a vital function as regulating mechanisms of this double equilibrium, by establishing direct connections between the hunter's behaviour and relationships within society, on the one hand, and his fortunes as a hunter, on the other.

The hunting magic of the Ndembu of Zambia, although radically different in form and content from that of the Brazilian backwoodsmen analysed by Da Matta, reveals the same intimate link between the social relations of the hunter and his success as a huntsman. The Ndembu, whose society and rituals have been excellently described by Professor Victor Turner, are a simple society of shifting cultivators. Game has become increasingly scarce in their territory, but enjoys a degree of prestige as food that is out of all proportion to its actual quantitative importance as a component of the Ndembu diet. Hunting has become a specialized activity pursued as a vocation by a small number of men, who characteristically scorn to have normal families and settled lives in conformity with the accepted life style of the agricultural villages.

Hunters enjoy great prestige, in large part because they are considered, by the nature of their professions, to be quintessentially masculine, tough, and to some extent above the law of ordinary men. These very qualities, however, make them to some extent a threat to the fabric of conventional social relations. They are, for example, likely to boast of their numerous adulterous affairs. The stereotype of the Ndembu hunter reflects the culturally significant properties of hunting as an economic activity: it is a difficult craft demanding considerable skill, physical endurance and luck, pursued in isolation from settled communities, prestigious but peripheral to the central social and economic life of the people.

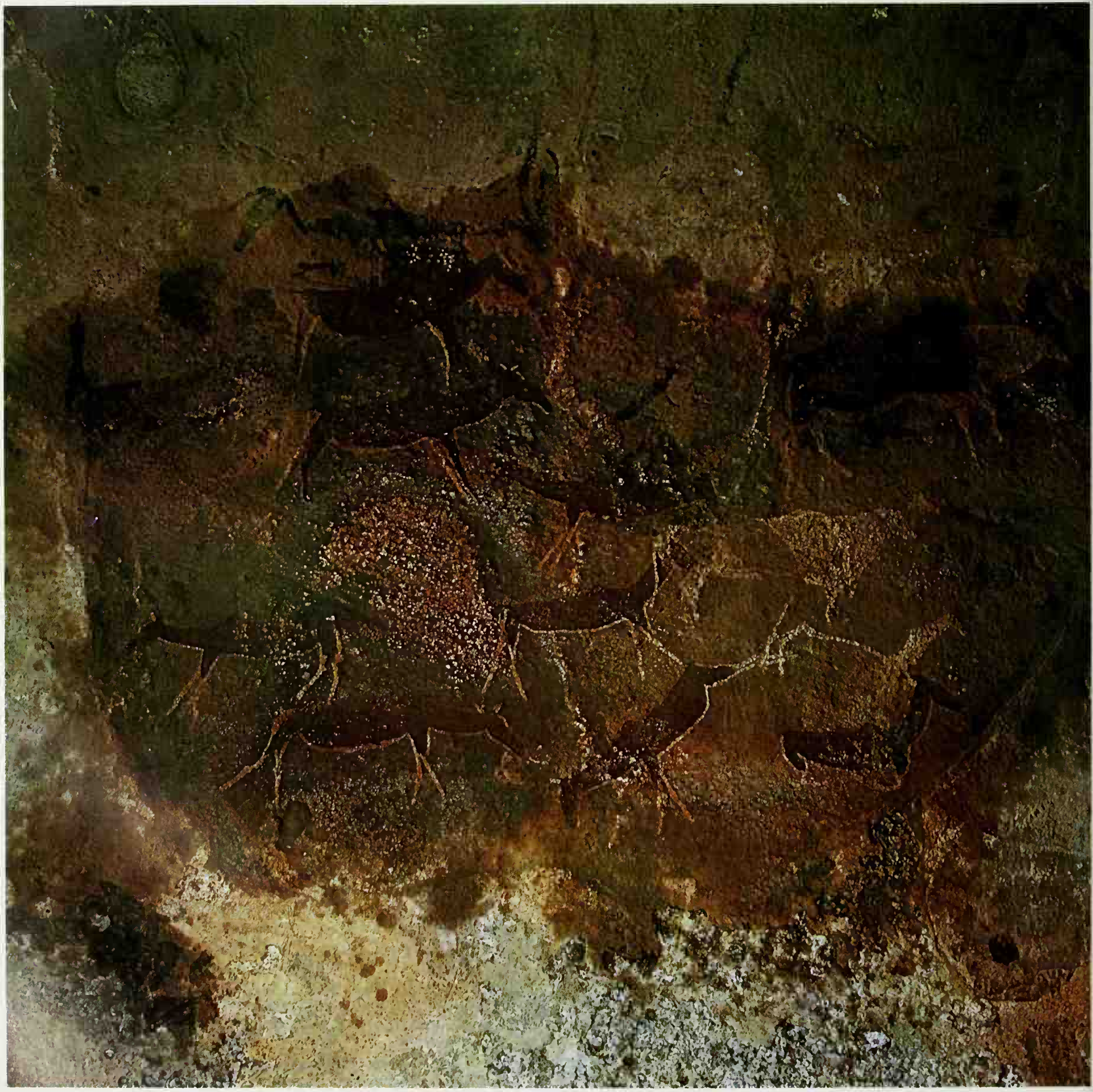
Among the Ndembu the craft of the hunter is bound up with two (very similar) cult associations, which exist for the purpose of performing rituals to 'cure' bad luck in hunting. The Ndembu conceive of huntsmanship as analogous in certain respects to a physical substance, that can be lost or spilled and replenished by magical means: the rites of the Ndembu hunting cults are aimed at restoring and increasing the powers of huntsmanship, while attacking the agency responsible for their loss. This is invariably conceived to be the shade of a recently deceased ancestor who was himself a hunter, and who has become displeased because the unlucky hunter has failed to honour one of a wide variety of social or ritual obligations to his kinsmen, to other hunters, or to the ancestral hunter's shade itself. The hunting rituals simultaneously propitiate the ancestral shade and initiate the novice hunter into the cult of hunters, which doubles as a kind of professional association. Great emphasis is placed on the solidarity of initiated hunters.

However, the presence or assistance of the novice's kinsmen, and the reaffirmation of his social bonds with them is as important for the performance of the rites as the support of his prospective colleagues of the hunter's cult. The magical rites of the hunting cults, which focus upon the erection of a shrine to the shade of the hunter-ancestor who is causing the affliction, serve to confront and reconcile two sets of relations and qualities that are to a large extent opposed and contradictory in normal life. On the one hand, they emphasize the distinctness of the calling of the hunter and the very qualities that serve to set him apart from, and to some extent in conflict with, conventional society; on the other hand, they stress the integration of the hunter into conventional society through the ritual reaffirmation of his ordinary kinship obligations, which form the basis of the Ndembu community.

The hunting ritual of the Ndembu, a primitive African tribe, and the magical beliefs of the backwoodsmen of modern Brazil illustrate a common point: the underlying purpose of hunting magic is frequently as much to integrate the hunter safely into human society as to promote the success of his ventures into the animal world.

TERENCE TURNER

FURTHER READING: Victor W. Turner, *The Forest of Symbols* (Cornell University Press, 1968); J. G. Frazer *The Golden Bough* (abridged edn, Macmillan, 1967 reprint).



Primitive man practised various rituals in an attempt to ensure success at hunting, and cave paintings are generally thought to be one of the devices he used to gain magical power over his quarry: Bushman paintings in Lesotho, southern Africa

Mental illness and crime are virtually unknown in the Hutterian communities of the United States and Canada; descendants of the religious dissenters of 16th century Europe, their way of life is determined by principles that have changed little over the last 400 years

HUTTERIAN BRETHREN

RECRUITED FROM the Anabaptists, an amorphous and widespread body of dissenters in early 16th century Europe, the Hutterian Brethren, or Hutterites, came into being as a distinct religious group in the late 1520s.

The Anabaptists were not an organized or coherent sect, and the name, which came from their insistence on the baptism of adults, was applied generally to the many differing and contentious dissenters in Europe at that time. The Hutterians took their name from Jacob Hutter, or Huter, although the group had already become a separate congregation of believers before he took over their leadership in 1529.

Anabaptists of any sort were liable to imprisonment or sentence of death in Switzerland and in the Hapsburg Empire, and many religious refugees made their way to Moravia (in what is now central Czechoslovakia) where the local nobility were prepared to grant them asylum. Among them were the earliest group to become known, later, as Hutterians.

The Anabaptists who settled on the estates of the Liechtensteins at Nikolsburg in Moravia were not a unified body; they differed in particular on the currently important matter of the legitimate means by which they should be prepared to defend themselves, and the nature of a Christian's duty to the state. The extreme party were adventists who rejected resort to arms and who demanded the community of goods. These ideas were expressed by Hans Hut (not to be confused with Jacob Hutter) and a group espousing these principles arose round Jacob Wiedemann. Under him they eventually left Liechtenstein's estates after that aristocrat had sought in vain to persuade the various dissenting groups to adopt common principles; and, such were their pacifist principles, they left because they objected to Liechtenstein's resorting to arms to protect them from King Ferdinand's special commissioner, who had been sent to persecute the Anabaptists at Nikolsburg.

The group fled to the estates of the Kaunitz family near the Moravian town of Austerlitz, and there they were joined by Tyrolean Anabaptists under Jacob Hutter, who quickly established a more rigorous communistic policy for the group than they had had previously. The disruption of the very different wing of Anabaptists at Münster in 1534 (see ENTHUSIASM) provided King Ferdinand with strong arguments for the expulsion of all Anabaptists from Moravia. The Hutterians took to the forest, and soon afterwards Hutter was captured and burned to death at Innsbruck.

A new leader emerged in Peter Riedemann, who travelled over many parts of Germany and Austria visiting scattered sympathizers. While imprisoned by the relatively sympathetic Landgrave Philip of Hesse in 1549, Riedemann wrote his *Rechenschaft* or 'Confession of Faith' which thereafter became, and remains to this day, the authoritative statement of Hutterian belief. The *Account*, as it is known in English, emphasizes the status of believers as children of the Covenant, through whom Christ's spirit works. Disobedience is seen as the source of sin, and the disobedient must be expelled from the Church. This emphasis on the 'ban' is widely found among Anabaptist groups (including the various Mennonite sects) and becomes the symbol for withdrawal from evil and the world. Pacifism and community of goods was reaffirmed by Riedemann, as demonstrations of *Gelassenheit* (surrender) and the elimination of selfishness.

Retirement at 45

Despite intermittent persecution by the authorities the Hutterians prospered: they numbered some tens of thousands in the 1570s, and developed skilled crafts in the service of their aristocratic protectors (although they refused to undertake work that was connected with warfare or work which contributed to sinful pleasures). They were driven from Moravia, Slovakia and Transylvania, when the Catholic Church and the Hungarian monarchy sought to impose infant baptism upon them, to prohibit their communism and to enforce their conversion to the Roman Church.

After successive flights they were eventually offered favourable terms by the government of Catherine the Great to settle and cultivate land in the Ukraine. They prospered there, and later in other parts of Russia, although, under the influence of the Mennonites with whom they became associated to some extent, some of them abandoned for a time their practice of communism. In the early 1870s the Russian government decided to impose obligations of military service on the various groups of foreign sectarians who had helped to settle their frontier regions, and the Hutterians decided, firmly in accordance with their principles, to resort once again to that pattern of response to the world that they had practised over the centuries. They migrated; and the entire population of about 700 Hutterians settled in the territory that was to become South Dakota.

Even in the United States the Hutterians were not safe from persecution. Although they received formal guarantees exempting them from military service and permitting them to establish independent schools, when the United States entered the First World War in 1917, the Hutterians, as German-speaking pacifists, encountered local social and political hostility. A court action was brought against them to enforce the dissolution of their corporations, and in this way to bring their communistic organization to an end. The grounds of the action were that in selling their produce to the wider society (a pattern on which they, like other communitarian sects, were dependent) they contravened the law under which they had corporate status. In the face of these threats the great majority of them migrated to Canada in 1918 and 1919. There, in Manitoba, Alberta and Saskatchewan they have prospered economically and multiplied in number.

Today, the Hutterians consist of three slightly differentiated groups distributed in well over 100 colonies in Canada and about 50 in the United States. The three groups are analogous to closely associated and friendly clans rather than to religious parties. The distinctions between them are marginal differences in customs and life style; their religious beliefs are identical. Each individual colony has about 50 to 150 members, a figure that remains constant as, when a group grows to about 150 it divides and establishes a daughter colony.

The increase in the Hutterian population has given rise to fears in parts of Canada that they will eventually drive other farmers from the land, particularly since the Hutterians have, as communitarians, the advantages of bulk purchase and the means to buy expensive equipment, and advantages in its use. They have been able to farm successfully on marginal land and to operate more efficiently than individual farmers. The Hutterians do in fact incur heavy repeated expense because of their growth in numbers and their needs for capital equipment to establish new colonies. But they live economically because their religious principles do not allow any luxuries, and although they eat well and do not overwork (men retire at about 45) they are self-sufficient in house-building, clothes-making and in the construction of the simple furniture that they use.

Production Not Pleasure

All members work in the colony, and farming is the staple employment, although each group has its craftsmen who do ancillary farming work. Some tasks such as milling flour have now been abandoned. They use modern equipment, electricity, timber, cement and other commodities that they cannot make for themselves. Unlike the Amish of Pennsylvania they have not maintained embargoes on such things as motor vehicles – as long as they are used for productive purposes and not for pleasure. Economic advantage is not pressed, however, where it might endanger community morale. Therefore, although they realize that there are more mechanized methods, they employ their womenfolk to paint their houses by hand, recognizing in labour an intrinsic virtue and also a means of demonstrating commitment to the community.

The Hutterian colony is both a community and a congregation. The two concepts are synonymous for them, and religious principles dominate their way of life, which has changed little in its social ethic since the mid-16th century. Avoidance of the world, surrender, pacifism, adult baptism and communism of goods are the principles that they derive from the Bible. Life is in, and for, the community. Although there are no means by which a colony can enforce a member to remain, few ever leave. Those who do are mainly young men who are lured into the outside world to work, and most of them return. Those who do not, tend to stand by their Hutterite beliefs, even though these, without community of goods and communal living, can be only a shadow of real Hutterianism.

'Teaching the Young Idea'

Each colony is presided over by a minister, whose duties are those of pastor and supervisor, and who is selected from a number of candidates nominated by the members of the colony. These must be approved by ministers and leading brethren from other groups and the final appointment is made by lot. Each community also elects a steward, who is concerned with the economy and administration, and under him are the elected heads of the various departments of the colony's work activities. Everyone in the community is assigned a task, and willingness to do what one is called to do is a basic assumption of Hutterian life, although the individual is also given some freedom to ask for a charge of work from time to time.

At some periods the Hutterians have separated young children from their parents and brought them up communally, but today families live in their own houses, even though all meals are taken in the community dining hall where men and women sit apart from each other. The colony kindergarten remains important, however, and is attended by all children over the age of about $2\frac{1}{2}$ years. Later the children attend a German school where they learn High German, their language at home being a Tyrolean dialect.

By agreement with the Canadian government they also receive normal school education in English and quite often a school run by the government is established in the colony. This development might yet be the most significant inroad into Hutterian apartness from the world, not only in introducing young Hutterians to the values and attitudes prevalent in the outside society, but in providing them with a good knowledge of English. Learning the language of the dominant culture has often reduced the insulation of migrant sects and has facilitated their assimilation into the wider society.

High Birth Rate

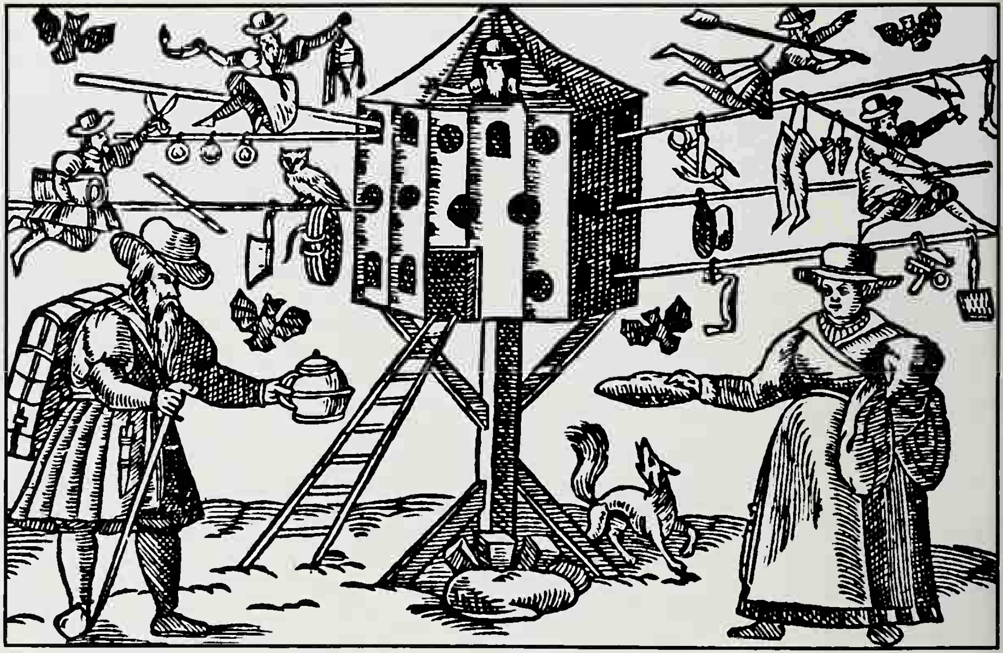
The Hutterians keep the education of their children to a legal minimum, and have shown no interest in the world's institutions of higher education. Wisely they recognize that, for life as a Hutterian, worldly education is unnecessary, and might be a cause of discontent and disruption. The sect is not without its own culture, however, and the accumulated religious writings of earlier leaders, and accounts of sect history, which, since the 1920s, have been printed, are in constant use among them. They read Mennonite newspapers, too, and farming periodicals.

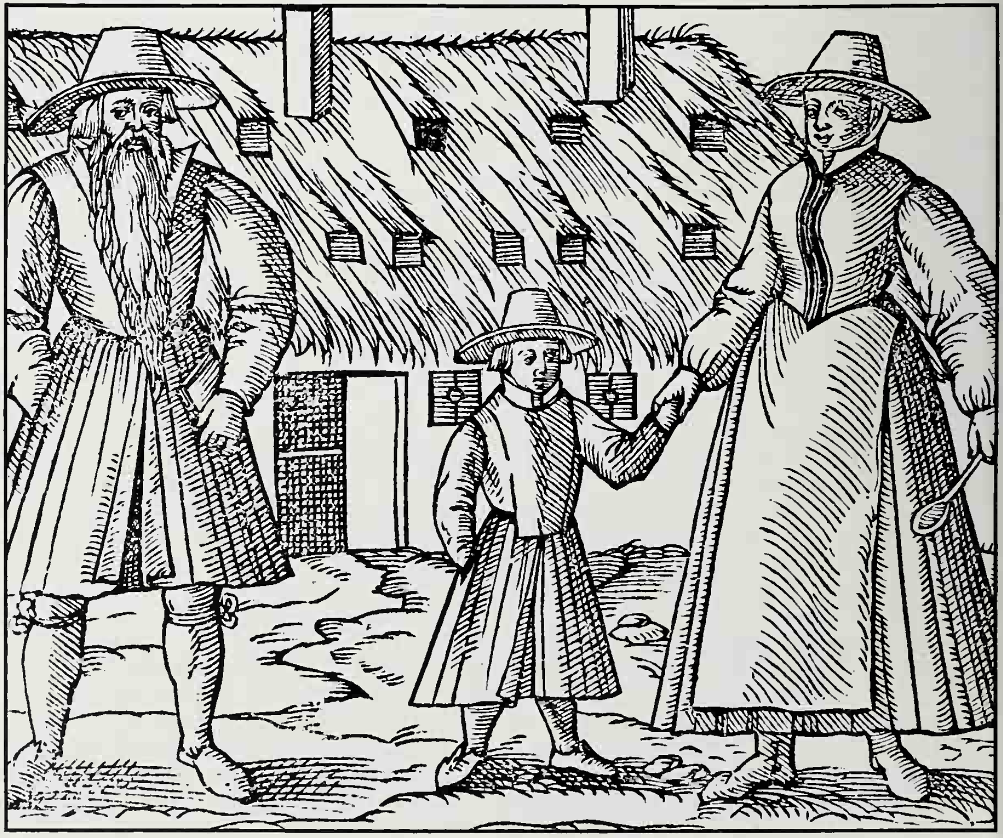
The movement has grown rapidly since settling in North America, and its membership has been estimated at over 12,000 in Canada and more than 5000 in the United States. Growth has been almost entirely due to the extremely high birth rate of the Hutterians. There have, however, been some attempts by outsiders to join the movement, particularly after the Second World War when the Arnoldites, followers of Eberhard Arnold, who had settled in Paraguay and who also called themselves the *Bruderhof*, gained recognition from the Hutterians as fellow religionists. The association did not last, however, principally because the Arnoldites mixed with the wider society in order to evangelize, and tolerated dancing and smoking.

In addition to their remarkable fecundity, the Hutterians' very low incidence of mental ill-health, and the absence of social pathology among them have attracted the attention of psychiatrists and sociologists. Crime, suicide, drug addiction, homosexuality, illegitimacy, alcoholism and divorce are virtually unknown, and they appear less subject to mental disturbance than those living in the wider society. They are freed from much of the stress of life in advanced society, and as far as such judgements are possible, it appears that the Hutterians are more contented and happier than most of their fellow men.

BRYAN WILSON

The Hutterian Brethren were persecuted and derided intermittently during the 16th century *Below* Illustration from the title page of a book lampooning the sect, in which members were referred to as pigeons *Bottom* 16th century illustration of a Hutterian family





HYENA AND JACKAL

THE NOCTURNAL WANDERINGS of the hyena, its association with death and the uncanny call of the striped species, which is said to resemble demoniacal laughter, have been responsible for the animal's importance in witchcraft. Although it is found mainly in the warmer regions of Asia and Africa, it is also credited with magical properties in European folklore.

Among the Matabele of Rhodesia it was said that wizards dug up corpses which they then turned into hyenas to use as messengers or steeds, while in Africa generally there was a widespread belief that wizards could transform themselves into hyenas. In Abyssinia tales were told of men transforming themselves into the animals while in full view of other people, and in the Sudan it was thought that magicians became hyenas at night in order to roam the countryside howling and gorging themselves. It is said that a soldier who shot a hyena followed the trail of blood to a hut where he found a wizard dying of a fresh wound; the soldier himself died shortly afterwards. In England tales of this kind were told of wounded hares later discovered to be witches. The Wanika of East Africa regarded the hyena as one of their ancestors and it was an offence to imitate its call. Like some South African Bantu they exposed their dead to be eaten by these animals.

In Europe a great variety of magical properties were attributed to the hyena. Greek writers recounted the Arab belief that if one of these animals stepped on a man's shadow it deprived him of the powers of speech and movement. They also reported that if a dog, standing on a roof in the moonlight, cast its shadow where a hyena could step on it the dog would fall to the ground. The statement by the 16th century writer, Bartholomew, that the hyena by circling an animal three times, could charm it into immobility may be a later elaboration of these notions.

Cure for Crocodile Bites

The supposed similarity between the hyena's howls and human cries or laughter, which contributed to African beliefs in humans changing into hyenas, also led to strange European notions. Aristotle stated that the hyena lured dogs by imitating the sound of a man vomiting, and Bartholomew elaborated on this idea in an account of how hyenas approached houses at night, mimicking the human voice and even calling men by name in order to devour them. Sir Kenelm Digby, the 17th century scientist, varied the theme; he wrote that the hyena could imitate the calls of all sorts of animals so that they flocked to him and were captured.

Among Pliny's prescriptions concerning the magical virtues of the hyena's body were the following: if haunted by nocturnal spirits wear a tooth from the beast suspended on a thread round your neck; to foil the charms of wizards smear the blood of a hyena around the doorposts of the house; to cause a woman to fall in love with you touch her lips with a whisker from the muzzle of one of these beasts.

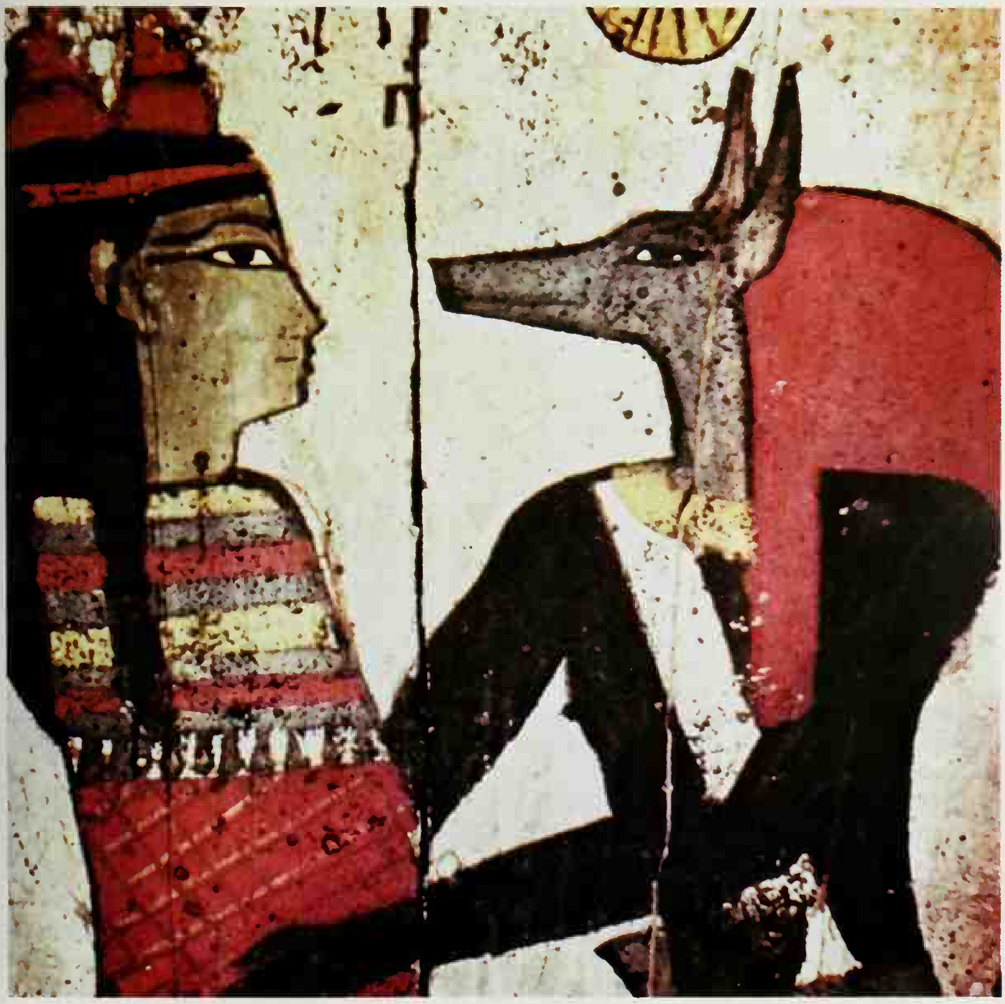
Encouraged by such statements English writers of the 15th to the 17th centuries pleased people who liked to be told of the strange qualities of unfamiliar animals by providing them with far-fetched ideas that owed more to imagination than to tradition. It was said that witches ate the heart and liver of the hyena in order to perform witchcraft. Topsell, whose *History of Four-footed Beasts* was published in 1607, stated that a hyena's skin hung on the gate of an orchard would ward off hail or lightning. He also remarked: 'The dung or filth of an hyena, being mingled with certain other medicines is very excellent to cure the bites and stingings of crocodiles and other venomous beasts.' According to this fanciful writer a man wearing a hyena's skin could pass unscathed through the midst of his enemies and the marrow of the animal's right foot 'is profitable for a woman that loveth not her husband, if it be put into her nostrils'.

Guardian of Cemeteries

Christian hermits living in the Egyptian desert in the 4th century were on familiar terms with hyenas and did not attribute magical properties to them. Stories are told of a hyena who led a hermit far into the desert to the cave where another was living; of another which on finding a hermit lost in the wilderness guided him to safety; and of St Macarius of Alexandria who, when a hyena brought her blind whelp to him, cured it by applying saliva to its eyes.

In a number of biblical contexts the word translated as fox refers to the jackal, an animal that appears in folklore and folktales as crafty and shrewd rather than malicious. As a scavenger and eater of carrion it acquired in some areas an association with death: in ancient Egypt Anubis, the jackal-headed guardian of cemeteries guided the dead to the judgement of Osiris. According to the ancient Indian laws of Manu a faithless wife would be a jackal in her next incarnation. The animal's apparent timidity is the reason why the Bushmen of southern Africa protect their children against becoming timorous by forbidding them to eat the animal's heart.

In Indian folktales the jackal has a role rather similar to that of the cunning fox in Europe. In one story a crocodile seizes a jackal's leg but the jackal talks the reptile into believing he is holding a tree root. In another a Brahmin who compassionately releases a tiger from a trap is about to be eaten when a jackal persuades the tiger to re-enter the trap. In yet another, an elephant swallows a jackal but dies when it is eaten by the animal inside it. The jackal finds himself trapped in the elephant's dried-up skin but calls for rain and escapes when rain falls and softens the hide.



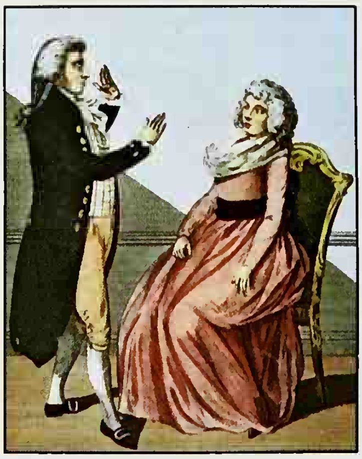
William MacQuitty

The jackal was associated with death in some areas; in Egypt the jackal-headed Anubis was thought to guide the dead to the place of judgement: wall painting showing Anubis with Nefertiti, the wife of Ikhnaten

Sonia Halliday

Hymn

In Christian tradition, a song of praise to God, usually sung to music in public worship: the ancient Greeks composed hymns in honour of their gods and heroes, the most notable being the Homeric Hymns; there are records of early hymns from ancient China, Egypt, Babylonia and India, usually in praise of their gods, but sometimes also sung to enlist aid in averting sickness or disaster.



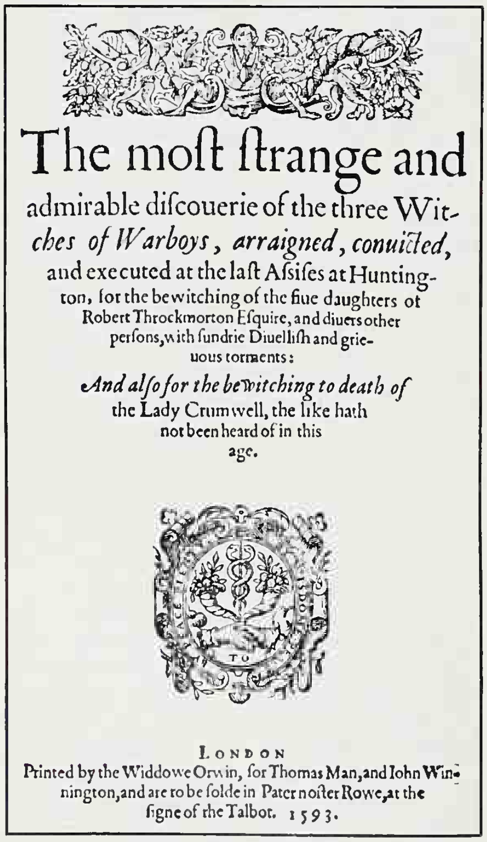
Mary Evans Picture Library

Hypnotism

The inducing of a sleep-like trance by repeated commands and mental concentration in which the subject acts only on the suggestion of the hypnotist: in such a trance state subjects are able to recall long-forgotten experiences: from the Greek *hypnos* meaning 'sleep', it is also termed mesmerism after F. A. Mesmer (1734–1815), an early pioneer of hypnotism, who called it 'animal magnetism', believing it to be an occult force: hypnotism is often used therapeutically to treat nervous disorders. See MESMER.

It now seems certain that many of those who were believed to be bewitched were in fact suffering from forms of mental illness and sexual repression; and that the attitude of society created a climate which fostered exhibitionism and hysterical manifestations

HYSTERICAL POSSESSION AND WITCHCRAFT



The moſt ſtrange and
admirable diſcouerie of the three Wit-
ches of Warboys, arraigned, conuicted,
and executed at the laſt Aſsiſes at Hunting-
ton, for the bewitching of the fiue daughters of
Robert Throckmorton Eſquire, and diuers other
perſons, with ſundrie Diuelliſh and grie-
uous torments:
And alſo for the bewitching to death of
the Lady Crumwell, the like hath
not been heard of in this
age.

LONDON
Printed by the Widdowe Orwin, for Thomas Man, and Iohn Winnington, and are to be ſolde in Pater noſter Rowe, at the
ſigne of the Talbot. 1593.

John Webb

After one of the most important witchcraft trials in England, Alice Samuels and her husband and daughter were executed as witches after the five daughters of Robert Throckmorton, a squire of Warboys in Huntingdon, had accused the family of bewitching them; this was the first of a series of similar cases in England: frontispiece to a tract on the 'Witches of Warboys' as the case became known, which was published in 1593

MUCH HAS BEEN WRITTEN in the last 50 years on the psychology of the witch herself. It seems undeniable, on the evidence of trials and personal testimonies, that in every era a number of the people who were accused of witchcraft did believe themselves to be witches. Isabel Gowdie, whose spontaneous confession in 1662 amazed and discomforted her contemporaries is a classic example of this type (see GOWDIE).

On the basis of this and comparable cases there is now a substantial modern literature which treats the witch as a mental case, a person suffering from a classic psychosis, often associated with senility, characterized by delusions as to her own importance and powers. While there is undoubtedly much truth in this view, it seems important to realize that the insanity was by no means one-sided. Frequently as much emotional abnormality, irrationality and sheer ill-will was displayed by the witch-hunters and the witches' 'victims' as by the witches.

Seen in the context of their own time, not all witches were grossly abnormal nor were all the 'bewitched' constitutionally inadequate or hysterical. Nor indeed were all the judges sadistic and neurotic: many were averagely decent, Christian men of their time, doing what they believed to be their duty. Nevertheless it is undeniable that the rigid, tendentious nature of Church law on witchcraft during the centuries of persecution, with the tendency to regard many circumstantial facts as automatic evidence of sorcery and to consider an accused witch guilty unless proved innocent, rather than the other way round, did load the dice consistently against the accused. This provided the opportunity for the abnormally impressionable or paranoid person, to give full rein to his or her imagination.

In every era there are a substantial number of people who are ready, indeed eager, to believe themselves harmed or threatened. The paranoiac who today believes that 'they' (the police, the government, the Jews, the blacks, the Communists, the Arabs) are conspiring against him or his society, is the same man as the suspicious citizen of past centuries who accused witches. The focus of paranoia changes with regimes and fashions in belief, but the type of emotion remains constant. Moreover most paranoiacs display a dreary lack of originality. The repetitive accusations against witches in the past ('they're cursing my pigs – blighting my crops – laming me') are paralleled today by accusations such as 'they're trying to kill me by radar' (or 'by electricity'), which are familiar to every mental health officer.

Unchanging, too, is the paranoid tendency to ascribe the evil not just to one individual's malevolence but to an organized conspiracy of ill-doers; hence the collective prejudice against a mythical 'secret society' – of witches, or Jews, or coloured people. The belief that the scapegoat-group are physically different in some way from ordinary people, and that they are plotting to multiply their number and gain control over society also seems to be constant. The probable explanation for this apparent flaw in the argument is that the accuser, having made a particular group into his collective scapegoat, has to justify his persecution of its individual and apparently defenceless members by making out that there is some widespread organization behind them. The judges who followed the dictates of the *Malleus Maleficarum* (1487) and similar manuals would no doubt have found it difficult to condemn many of the simple old hags dragged before them unless they had fixed in their minds the idea that it was the whole secret society of witchcraft they were attacking, not just this individual.

Self-induced Symptoms

It may be felt that accusations made by individual paranoid schizophrenics can hardly account for the large-scale witch persecutions that took place, especially on the Continent, in the 15th and 16th centuries. In fact, though such clinical paranoia may have been relatively rare, even one isolated case in a town could (and still can) serve to excite the milder, more generalized but equally irrational paranoid tendencies and prejudices found among otherwise sane members of the community. Therefore, although there are probably only a few people in a community at any one time who are convinced that they themselves have been singled out by the scapegoat for evil attentions, there are many more who will concede the possibility of such things happening.

There is also another form of unbalanced behaviour which is in itself less ominous than paranoia but which can be just as devastating in its social effect if it is not recognized for what it is. This is characterized by the production of hysterical ailments, usually believed by the subject himself to be genuine. The prime reason for them seems to be a desire to attract attention and sympathy, but often an accusation is thrown in to substantiate the hysteric's case. The accusation is therefore not an essential part of the syndrome, but when it is made, and believed, the effect is the same as with the primary accusations of the paranoiac.

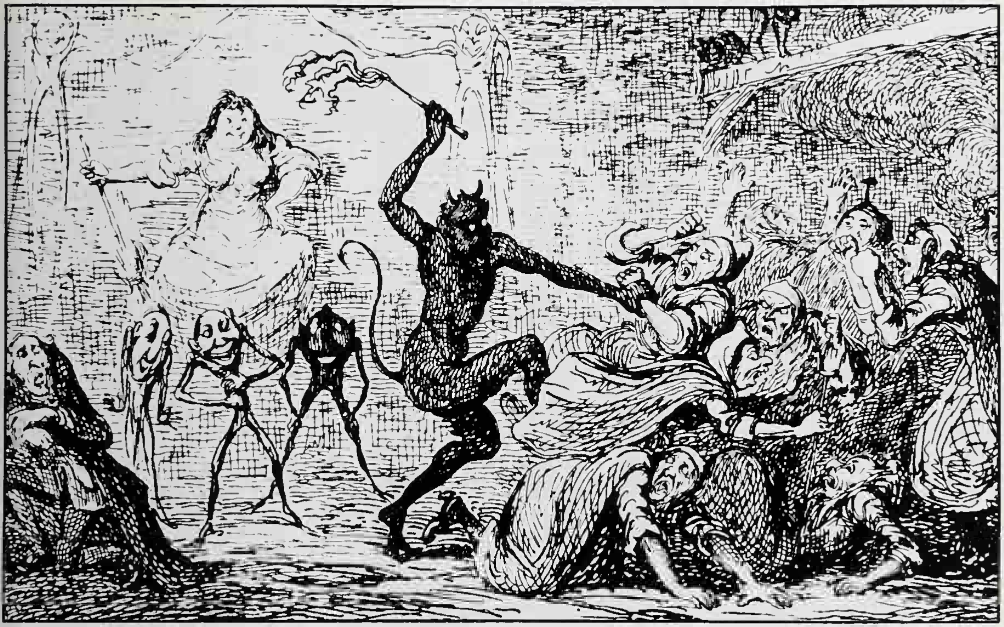
In short, while the paranoiac develops a rooted distrust of one particular person or group, and only then invents his injuries, often fantastic ones, the hysteric reverses the process. He – or, perhaps more typically, she – produces symptoms of injury, often in great variety and abundance, and only then casts around for a scapegoat on which the blame can convincingly be laid. Usually this process seems to be unconscious, but it also seems possible that in many cases the hysteric does know, at some level, that her afflictions are self-induced, and therefore finds it particularly necessary to have a good story about their origins. There is no doubt that both types of person, the paranoiac and the hysteric, made a substantial contribution to the history of witch-persecution.

Very little was generally known or accepted about the working of the human mind in the Middle Ages or, indeed, until the 19th century. At various times individual physicians and scholars preached what we should now regard as sound sense: Agrippa (1486–1535) was one and he narrowly escaped being branded as a witch himself for his pains (see AGRIPPA). His pupil the Dutchman Johannes Wier or Weyer was another, and so were the 16th century English squire Sir Reginald Scot and, slightly later, an English doctor named John Cotta. Other writers, such as James I of England in his *Demonologie* (1597) and Joseph Glanvil in his *Saducimus Triumphatus* (1681), while subscribing in the main to popular prejudice on the subject of witchcraft, were sufficiently intelligent to discount certain aspects of it, or to point out rampant abuses. Glanvil, who was in principle a persecutor of witches, admitted that it was 'very improbable that the devil who is a wise and mighty spirit would be at the beck of a poor hag, and have so little to do as to attend to the errands and impotent lusts of a silly old woman.'

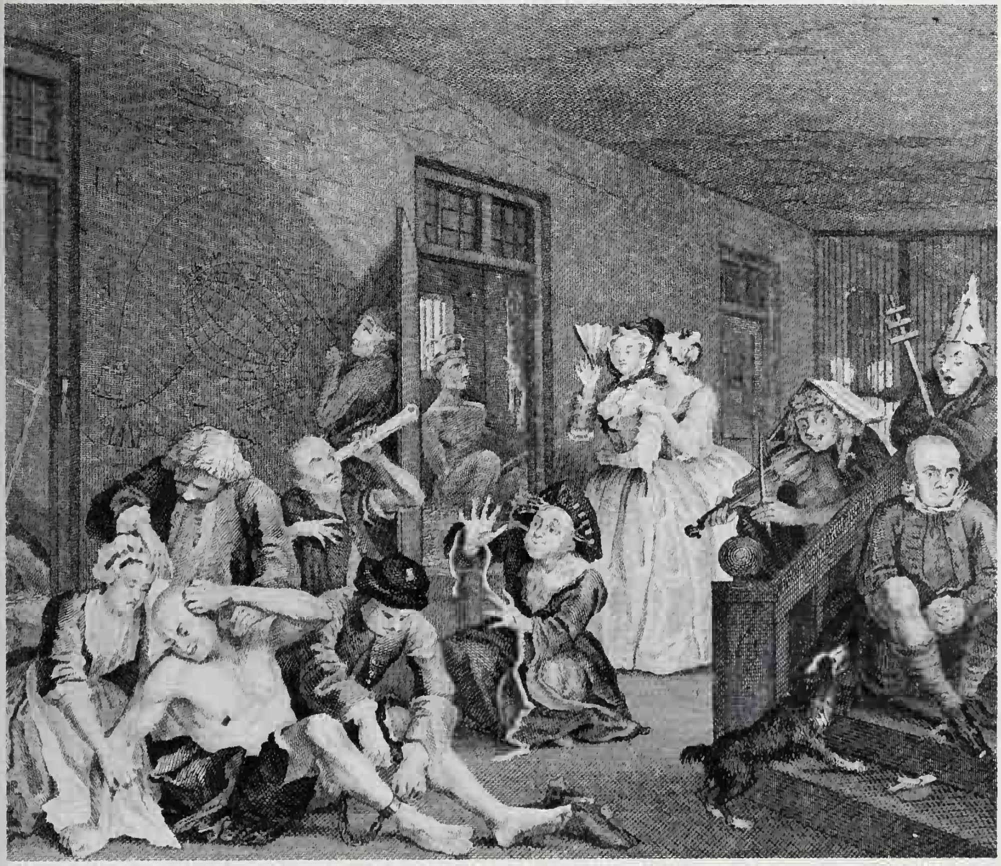
But such flashes of reason have to be set against a background of radical ignorance and prejudice. The ancient belief in possession by devils was entrenched in Christian thought; the madman in the New Testament whose 'devil' Christ was supposed to have cast out was the prototype for an interminable series of lunatics in the 16th and 17th centuries whose madness was blamed on the evil attentions of a witch. Inevitably, if society has this basic concept of 'bewitching', the supposed signs of it are taken at their face value without further examination. There was little realization, in the centuries of persecution, that vomiting, pains, disturbance of the menses, impotence, paralysis and indeed 'wasting disease' and fits, could be psychosomatic or hysterical ailments, having their root in the sufferer's own fear or in desire for attention rather than in any organic interference on the part of another.

Hysteria Due to Repression

One of the oldest charges against witches was that they caused impotence, either (in the most ancient accusations) by stealing the male organ, or by 'impeding the conjugal action of men and women' in some less drastic way. This may be taken as simply one manifestation of the general link between witchcraft and sterility, the distortion of the original fertility cults into a 'black' form. It may also be considered as evidence for an important psychological source of witch-fear, the rejection of the mother figure and the buried, infantile fear that the mother is all-powerful and has the power to castrate. The sexual roots both of certain forms of



Chris Barker



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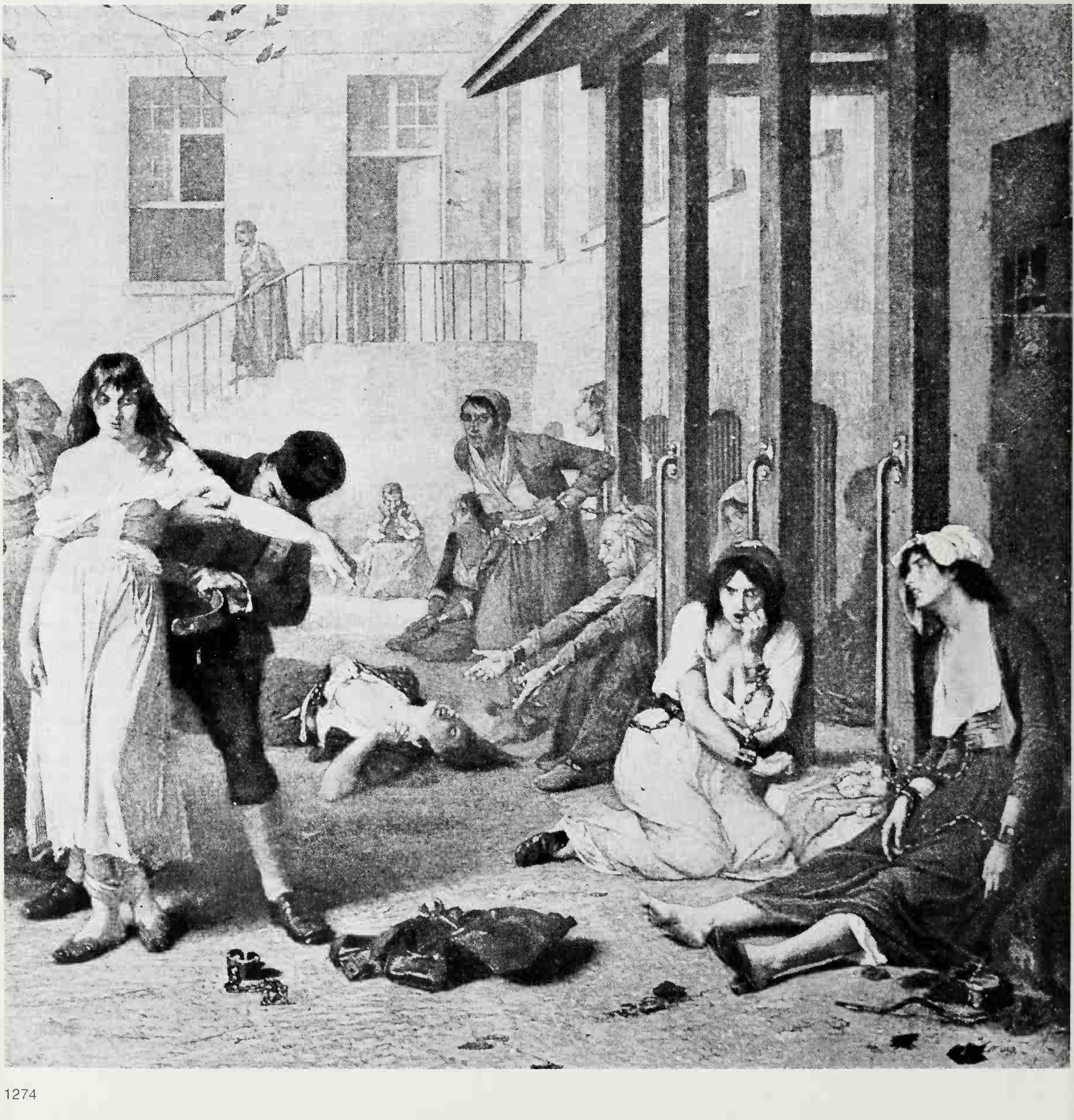
Above left **Although she was clearly demented, Isobel Gowdie persuaded others that she was a witch: George Cruikshank's illustration of the Devil chastising his followers was inspired by her colourful account of the sabbaths she attended. Mental illness was in fact the cause of many cases of apparent possession *Left* Engraving of a scene from *The Rake's Progress* by William Hogarth *Overleaf* Inmates of an 18th century French asylum are unchained as a result of the humane intervention of Dr Pinel, a pioneering psychiatrist**

witch activity and of witch-phobia are obvious, but as time went by the emphasis within this psycho-sexual area changed.

The male accusing the witch of stealing his masculinity largely disappears, and instead there appear in the records numerous women displaying what to modern eyes seem clear symptoms of hysteria due to sexual repression. These they frequently blamed on male demons and, ultimately, on a specific witch, male or female, who was said either to be wishing the demons onto them or, if a man, 'possessing' them, in two senses, in spirit form. The earliest such recorded case occurred among a group of nuns at Cambrai, in France in 1491, shortly after the *Malleus Maleficarum* and the Bull of Pope Innocent VII had alerted the gullible public to the dangers of witchcraft all round them. The nuns had fits in which they showed superhuman strength, barked like dogs and foretold the future. Eventually the nun who had first begun to have fits, and who was therefore the ringleader of the hysteria, was 'unmasked' as a witch herself.

This was by no means the last occasion on which a 'witch's victim' was finally declared to be a witch herself, and this illustrates the confusion that existed on the whole subject of possession. Literally, the root of the word 'possess' implies that the person is being inhabited by an alien spirit sitting within him or her, as distinct from 'obsessed', the linguistic root of which means 'sitting by'. Since witches were commonly regarded as being 'possessed by the Devil', in the sense of owned by him, and also as having intercourse either with him or with 'possessing' demons in the forms of incubi and succubi, the assertion that one was 'possessed' could be rather double-edged.

At the same time, since it was also believed that witches could 'shift shape', go forth in spectral form and send their own spirits or those of attendant demons out to inhabit hapless bodies. A plea that one was possessed could also be regarded as a protestation of innocence. 'Involuntary possession' could therefore be a legal defence and a let-out; it was used as such by Johannes Wier when defending accused witches. This doctor of medicine, who has been often called 'the founder of modern



Culver Pictures, New York

psychiatry', was a pious man who subscribed to the established belief in devils but at the same time displayed an admirable insight, common sense, and frequently courage, in judging particular cases, rejecting hearsay evidence and carefully scrutinizing notions of bewitchment. 'The uninformed and unskilled physicians,' he wrote in his book *De Praestigiis Daemonum*, 'relegate all the incurable diseases, or all the diseases the remedy for which they overlook, to witchcraft. In all such cases a good doctor is to be consulted because nothing is more important than to make the clinical situations as clear as daylight, for in no domain of human life are human passions quite so freely at play as in this one, these passions being superstition, rage, hate and malice.'

Wier's lifetime (1515-1588) was the heyday of possession cases in Europe, and many of them involved communities of nuns or single young women. Writing at the beginning of the 17th century, Guazzo, an Italian 'authority' on witchcraft, noted that 'those especially afflicted were bound by a vow of virginity', but the only conclusion he drew was that 'it was wonderful with what wiles the Devil surrounded them to deter them from chastity'. Elsewhere in his book *Compendium Maleficarum* his list of the symptoms of possession makes one wonder if some of the possessed were suffering not merely from an excess of enforced chastity but from epileptic fits: he notes rigor of the limbs, contortions, rolling eyes, fainting, the appearance of being strangled, palpitations, panting, vomiting and coma.

Another list of symptoms, drawn up by a priest at Louviers in France, after an outbreak among the nuns there, points more to a purely psycho-sexual hysteria. They included: denial of knowledge of the fits after paroxysm had ended; incessant obscenities and blasphemies; circumstantial descriptions of the sabbat; fear of sacred relics and sacraments; violent cursing at any prayer; lewd exposure and acts of abnormal strength; and finally similar manifestations in others around. A feature of witchcraft outbreaks, this last symptom strongly suggests that the desire for attention played a part in cases of 'possession'.

French nuns, in particular, continued to show signs of being possessed well into the 17th century. A company of them at Lille in 1613 claimed to be leading a life which was one long orgy. A similar outbreak in Madrid, in 1628, petered out when the Inquisition dispersed the nuns involved to different convents. Far more lasting in its effects was the most famous case of all, that of the bewitched nuns of Loudun in 1634; even after the execution of the worldly priest Urbain Grandier, who had been charged with causing their demonic possession, the hysteria spread (see LOUDUN NUNS).

In Protestant countries this showy form of mass-possession never seems to have been so popular, partly because the Protestants did not have so many all-female institutions, such as convents, which proved such fertile breeding grounds for this psycho-sexual hysteria. Protestants also favoured prayer rather than exorcism in cases of possession; a less dramatic and less rewarding treatment from the hysteric's viewpoint. As a modern writer, T. K. Oesterreich, has put it, 'possession begins to disappear among civilized races as soon as belief in spirits loses power'. In England possession was never popular among adults, but there are numerous 17th-century English cases concerning children and adolescents.

Snails and Puppy-Dogs' Tails

The pattern of such cases seems to have been based, like so much in English witchcraft, on European prototypes of a generation or so earlier, described by English writers. There was, for instance, Richard Baxter's account of what seems to have been a classic case in Louvain in 1571. A 15-year-old girl, Catherine Gualter, took to vomiting 'great flocks of hair, with filthy water, such as in ulcers, and sometimes like the dung of doves and geese, and in them pieces of wood, and those like new chips lately cut off an old tree, and abundance of skins like parchment shavings . . . After this she vomited innumerable stones, some like walnuts, and like pieces broken out of old walls and with some of the lime on them.' The writer added cautiously 'that she was cured by the priest's means does not render the story incredible, though there be many deceits.'

Baxter seems to have suspected, as a modern reader may, that the girl herself had been deliberately swallowing a variety of unpalatable objects – a symptom not unknown in present-day hysterical psychopaths. It is also possible that she had not really vomited all the matter produced at all, but simply pretended to have done so. No doubt this explains many of the recorded instances of people apparently vomiting an extraordinary selection of things, from pins and needles to snails, puppy-tails and live frogs; and also of some of the related cases of 'bewitched' women giving birth to such creatures as leverets or kittens. Other of these unnatural progeny may, in fact, have been deformed, aborted human foetuses which were not recognized as such.

In Vienna, in 1583, after a 16-year-old girl had complained of abdominal cramps, a group of Jesuits spent eight weeks exorcizing her. In the end they claimed to have expelled from her 12,652 living demons which her grandmother kept as flies in glass jars. The grandmother was then tortured into confessing intercourse with the Devil in the shape of a ball of thread, and was burnt to death. If that adolescent's secret motive had been to reject her matriarch, she had succeeded all too well.

The first of a series of such cases in England was the Warboys case, which was also the most discussed witchcraft trial in the land before 1600. In 1589, the ten-year-old daughter of Robert Throckmorton, a squire of Warboys in Huntingdon, began to have fits. These she blamed on the influence of Mrs Alice Samuel, a respectable, elderly neighbour, and presently her four sisters, aged from nine to 15, began to have fits. A local doctor hinted at the possibility of witchcraft, and though the parents were at first inclined to dismiss the whole thing as children's 'wantoness' they reluctantly agreed to confront Mrs Samuel with the girls. Upon this the fits became more dramatic – though soon the girls reversed their ideas and began to have fits in the old woman's absence so that for a time she was forced to live in the house with them, suffering many indignities.

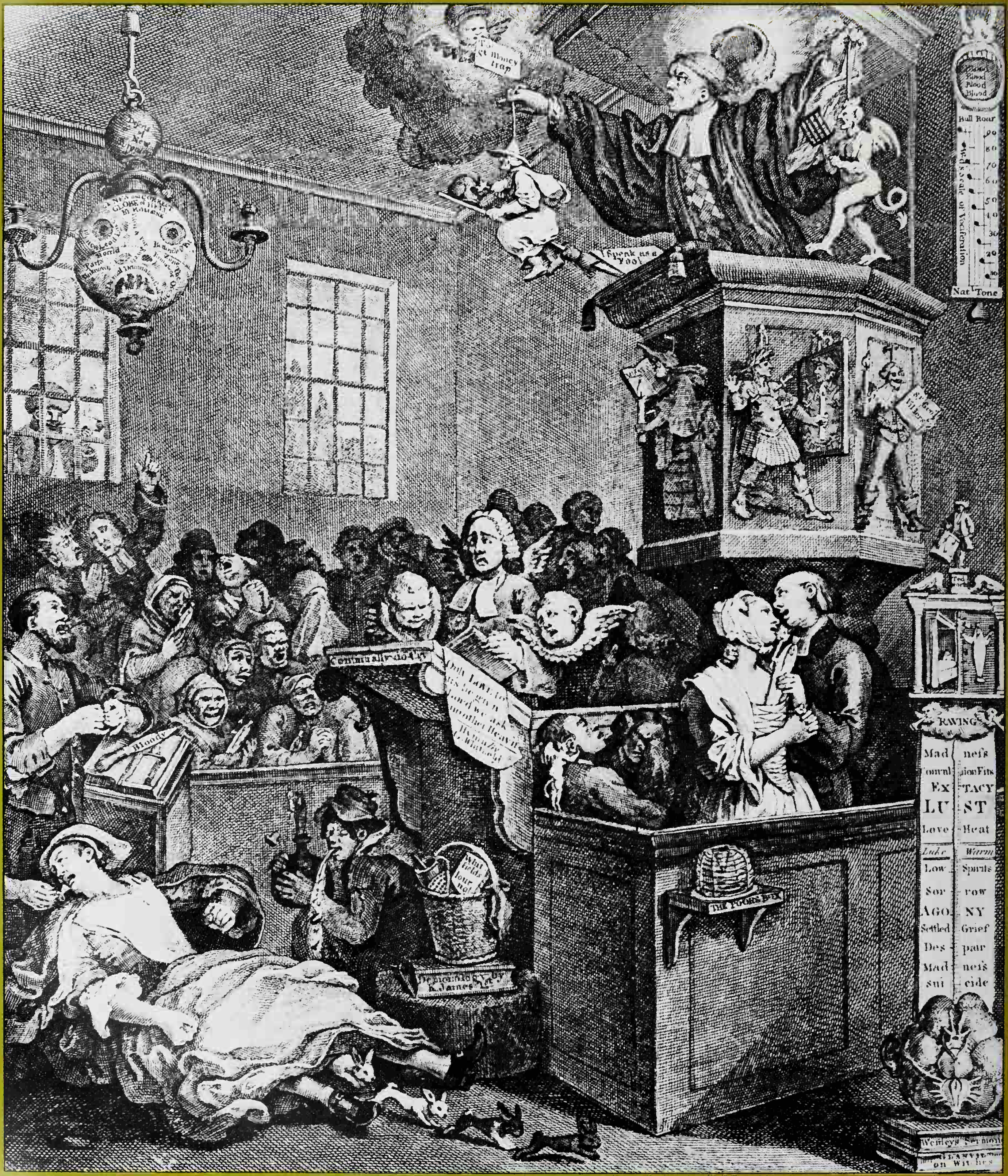
When this had been going on for nearly a year and had become the talk of the neighbourhood, a distinguished visitor to the house, Lady Cromwell (grandmother of Oliver Cromwell) attacked Mrs Samuel physically, slashing off part of her hair which she ordered to be burnt. The significance of this attack, an example of the custom of 'scratching a witch' to destroy her power, was not lost on poor Mrs Samuel who cried, 'Madam, why do you use me thus? I never did you any harm as yet' – a probably innocent remark which was later made to seem ominous when the 'yet' was emphasized. Lady Cromwell died two years later, when the fits were still going on.

At last, to placate the family, Mrs Samuel ceremonially ordered the girls to stop. They did so, of course, which was taken as proof that she was a witch indeed. She was nagged by the local parson into 'confessing', but next day retracted her statement. She was, however brought before the Bishop of Lincoln and held in custody to await the Assizes along with her husband and her daughter Agnes, whom by this time the girls had also implicated. The fits went on, and now the children began saying that the Samuels had magically murdered Lady Cromwell. By this time the neighbourhood was aroused, and there were additional stories of sorcery. The Assize jury found all three suspects guilty and old Mrs Samuel confessed to intercourse with the Devil. Agnes, however, refused to confess and further declined to save her own life by pleading pregnancy (a recognized escape route) with the fine remark 'Nay, that I will not do: it shall never be said that I was both a witch and a whore.' All three were hanged. The Throckmorton girls appear to have lived a normal adult life.

Adolescent Fantasies

The case was an important one because, for the first time in England, the families involved were people of considerable education and influence. It was widely reported and this must have helped to spread and confirm popular superstitions and to make them credible to the law-making classes. A series of comparable cases followed over the next two generations. In 1596 at Burton-on-Trent a boy called Thomas Darling had fits in which he claimed to see green cats. He accused a woman called Alice Goodridge, who was convicted and finally died in jail. He was allowed to 'scratch' her, at which she said, 'Take blood enough, child. God help thee.' The child answered, 'Pray for thyself, thy prayers can do me no good.'

Another boy, in Pendle in 1634, accused a number of people, among them Jane Device, daughter of a convicted witch, who as a child had been responsible for getting her own mother executed (see LANCASHIRE WITCHES). He later retracted his statement,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Wesley's Sermons
Glanvil on Witches

but by this time three of the accused (although not the indestructible Janet) had already died in prison. Yet more children's evidence, at Bury in 1644, brought about the execution of two hitherto respected women, after a trial at which the scholar Sir Thomas Browne gave 'expert' evidence for the prosecution. But many English juries were uneasy about such testimony, even at the height of the witch-phobia.

A famous case occurred in 1620, when a boy claimed to be bewitched, to be vomiting oddments and to be voiding blue urine. He was kept under observation and was caught pouring ink into his chamber-pot and also stuffing ink-soaked paper under his foreskin – behaviour not untypical of a neurotic child in any era. His particular devil was supposed to send him into fits on hearing the first verse of the first chapter of St John, but those watching the boy were soon to discover that the devil did not apparently understand it read in Greek. The boy was made to apologize publicly to the witch he had accused, and the case was withdrawn. The contemporary comment that the boy had probably been coached in his symptoms by a Catholic priest, sheds a slightly more sinister light on the issues of principle and belief involved in such cases.

***Credulity, Superstition and Prejudice*, an engraving by William Hogarth. By the 18th century withcraft was no longer accepted by educated men. One 18th-century judge dismissed a case of witchcraft with the comment that it was no crime to fly on a broomstick. Here Hogarth satirises popular prejudices and phobias with his usual savagery**

Probably no case of witchcraft possession is as famous as that of the 'Witches of Salem' which occurred in the New World in 1692, at a time when the idea of witchcraft was being officially relinquished in Europe. In many respects it comes closest to the Warboys case of a century earlier, in that in Salem, as in Warboys, a group of adolescent girls got the bit between their teeth, and rocked a whole community by their malevolent fantasies and exhibitionism. In Warboys only three people died; in Salem, however, over 150 were arrested of whom 31 were tried and sentenced to death. Of these 19 were hanged, two died in jail, one was pressed to death and five others made confessions which secured them reprieves. The remainder escaped death for various reasons.

The only reason the holocaust was not much greater was that within a year, the wave of witch hysteria began to pass; the soberer citizens of the New England township were beginning to come to their senses and doubt was cast on the very principle of 'spectral evidence'. Within a generation the whole affair came to be officially regarded as an unfortunate and backward-looking error of judgement, and some paltry restitution was made to the survivors of the trials. The girls responsible went unpunished and only one ever recorded anything like a confession (see SALEM WITCHES).

Striking contrast is afforded by the case of Jane Wenham in 1712, the last conviction for witchcraft in England, though a witch was burnt in Scotland some years later. Jane's accuser, the servant maid of a minister, claimed to suffer from fits, visions of cat-devils and the vomiting of pins. Jane Wenham, who had long been known as the 'wise woman of Walkerne', was arrested, searched for witch marks, and made a confession. Under her pillow was found 'magic ointment' allegedly made from human fat rendered down, and also cakes of feathers. Clearly Jane thought of herself as a witch, and may have had malevolent intentions. But those concerned with her case had more enlightened ideas. A pamphlet war raged around her in true 18th century style and she was reprieved.

It is the treatment of the maid that is most interesting from a modern point of view. A doctor examined this girl, and ordered that she wash her hands and face twice a day, and that she be confined under observation. Her keeper was to be 'a lusty young fellow'. This was done. The fits and other inconveniences ceased forthwith, and the lusty young fellow later married her. Light, it seems, had at last broken on the true nature of possession and the real needs of many of the possessed.

GILLIAN TINDALL

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IBN ARABI

GENERALLY ACKNOWLEDGED as one of the greatest mystics of Islam, Mohammed ibn Ali ibn Arabi, of the Arab tribe of Ta'i, was born in 1165 at Muriac in south-east Spain. He is known as *Muhyi 'd-Din*, 'the Vivifier of the Religion' and *Ash-Shaikh al-Akbar*, 'The Greatest Sheikh'.

When visiting Cordova as a very young man he came into contact with an aged woman saint who was one of his first spiritual guides. He considered himself to be also, and above all, the disciple of Abu Madyan who was looked on as the greatest spiritual master of the age and who is now the patron saint of Algeria. 'My sheikh' he calls him, though he received his teaching through a disciple and never actually met him.

In 1198, at the age of 33, Ibn Arabi had a vision in which he received a Divine Command to go to the East, and he set off in the direction of Egypt, never to return to the lands of his birth and upbringing. From Cairo he went to Jerusalem and from there, in 1201, he made the pilgrimage to Mecca where he spent two years. After visiting Baghdad and Mosul in south-western Asia he lived for a while in what is now eastern Turkey. The Sultan of Konya showered gifts upon him, and later Ibn Arabi went to Aleppo where the king, a son of Saladin, also received him with great honour. He married more than once, and had several children. The last ten years of his life were spent in Damascus, where he died in 1240 at the age of 75. His tomb on the slopes of the hill at the north end of the town has been a much-visited shrine ever since. Two of his sons, both of them Sufis, survived him, and are buried beside him.

Ibn Arabi was the most prolific of all Sufi writers (see SUFIS). His unique combination of quality with quantity is in a sense a vindication of his claim, repeated again and again throughout his works, that everything he wrote was forced upon him by the Divine Spirit. His writing was never motivated, he says, by the desire to compose a book. It was simply, as he puts it, 'a way out' from the fire of inspiration which he sometimes felt would burn him up. This inspiration, he is careful to state, is below that of a prophet, being such as belongs by right to 'an heir of the prophets'. His largest surviving work, *The Meccan Revelations* which the 'angel of inspiration' ordered him to begin during his first visit to Mecca, consists of 565 chapters (about 3000 printed pages) and was written over a period of 30 years. It contains much about his own life and the lives of earlier Sufis, and is also rich in information about the symbolism of letters and numbers, about astrology, symbolic geometry and other esoteric sciences. His most read work, a book in 27 chapters usually known in translations as *The Wisdom of the Prophets*, was revealed to him in its entirety in a single night when he was was already 65. The prophets (each chapter is devoted to one) range from Adam to Mohammed, and include Jesus and John the Baptist.

But some of Ibn Arabi's shorter treatises, often more concerned with practice than with speculation, best reflect his own life, which was essentially one of invocation, spiritual retreats, contemplation and pilgrimages to saints both living and dead, interspersed with the most remarkable visions. The long prayers which he formulated for his own use and for his disciples are still used in some of the Sufi orders, for although the order which he himself founded never became very widespread, he belongs in a sense to all the orders in virtue of his outstanding authority.

In a list of his writings which he drew up about six years before his death he gives a special section of 'books which the All-Highest Truth commanded me, in my heart, to set down but which He has not yet commanded me to bring forth to mankind'. Of these, 176 in number, only 16 have come down to us. Many of his 'publishable' writings also seem to have been lost.

'Oneness of Being'

In addition to his other gifts, Ibn Arabi is also one of the greatest poets of Islam. Particularly important is his *Interpreter of Longings* (*Tarjuman al-Ashwaq*) a collection of spiritual love poems addressed to the daughter of a Persian sheikh whose acquaintance he made in Mecca, a young woman of great beauty, piety and eloquence who was for him something of what Beatrice was for Dante. After his first visit to Mecca he does not appear to have ever seen her again, but the impression that she made upon him was lasting.

The most exalted and at the same time the most generally known aspect of his writing lies in his formulations of 'Oneness of Being', a doctrine known as 'monism' to Western scholars who have, more often than not, failed to realize that it is in no sense the invention of Ibn Arabi. 'Oneness of Being' is the doctrine that only God *is*, and that the existence of anything else is pure illusion. The created universe is nothing other than the overflowing of God's merciful infinitude, which does not thereby cease to be its one indivisible Self. This has always been the basic doctrine of Islamic mysticism and it stems, as far as Islam is concerned, from the Koran itself and from utterances of the Prophet. What characterizes Ibn Arabi is his extreme and sometimes provocative explicitness, where most of his predecessors had preferred to express themselves by aphorism. 'Men are asleep, and when they die they wake', said Mohammed; Ibn Arabi points out that the world as man sees it is a dream-world and that like a dream it stands in need of interpretation; and he relentlessly strips the dream-mask of illusory plurality from the face of the 'One Reality' on every possible occasion and, it must be admitted, on some occasions where it is pointless to do so.

Ibn Arabi is however criticized far less for his occasional lapses than for the doctrine itself, which is especially associated with him and which is too profound not to be misunderstood.

But if he has had violent critics in every generation since his death, these have always been far outnumbered by his devotees – witness the great number of commentaries that have been written on his works, especially on *The Wisdom of the Prophets*. Moreover eminent authorities have made pronouncements in favour of Ibn Arabi's orthodoxy; and in the 16th century a mosque was built in his honour over the site of his tomb by the Ottoman Sultan Selim II.

MARTIN LINGS

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IBO

BEFORE THE CIVIL WAR in Nigeria, the Ibo were estimated at some 7 million and lived on both banks of the Niger. Though they occupy a continuous territory and their language is the Ibo branch of the Kwa group of West African languages, they are composed of a number of communities whose membership varies from a few hundreds to many thousands. These often bear the name of a hero, for example the Umundri or descendants of Ndri, and appear to have arisen as a result of the breaking up of large family groups. These speak related dialects, but show marked cultural differences.

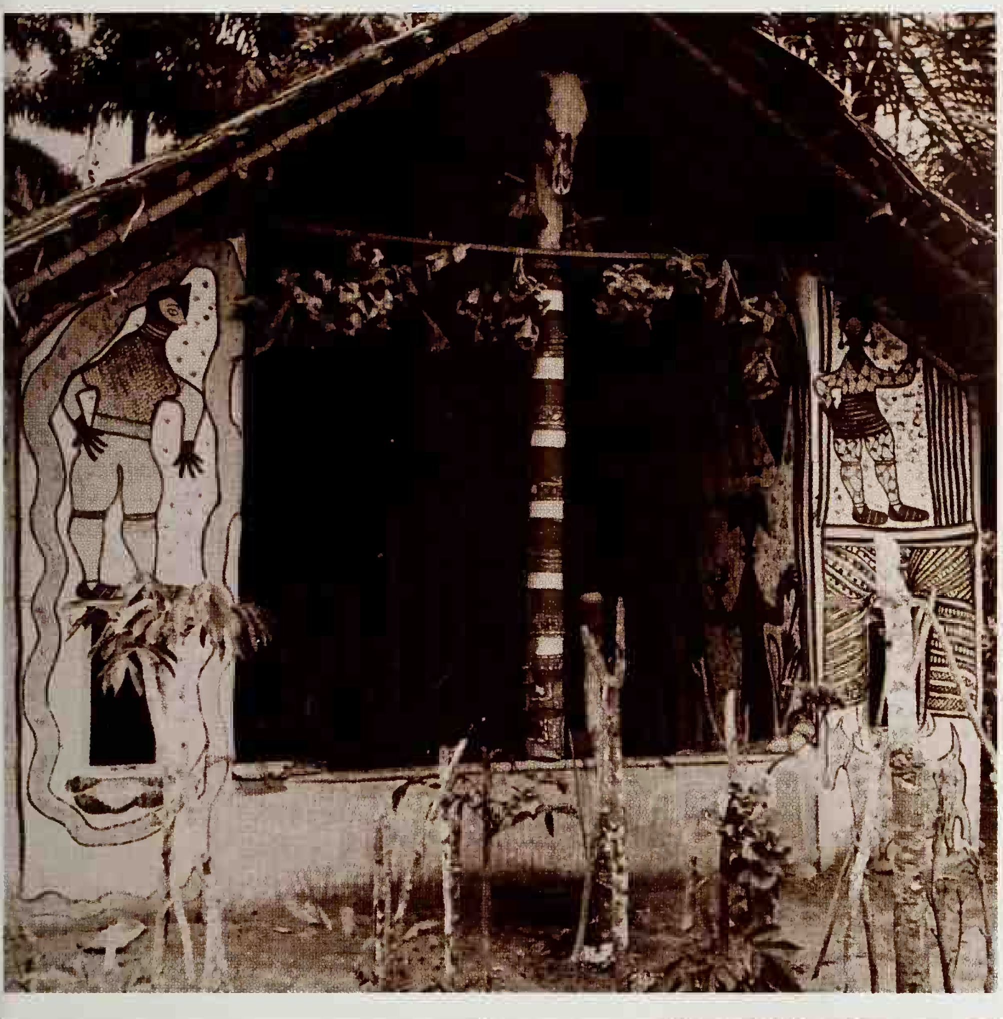
A myth of origin exists among the Umundri. The following version was narrated to me by a gathering of priests. 'The name of our founder is Ndri, the son of Eri: Namuku is his wife. Eri and Namuku were sent down by Chuku (a sky god). All the first things happened at Aguleri where the Umundri group started. When Eri came down from the sky he had to stand on a termite mound as all the earth was then a morass. Eri complained to Chuku who sent a metal worker, Awka, with bellows, charcoal and fire to dry up the land. Awka did so.'

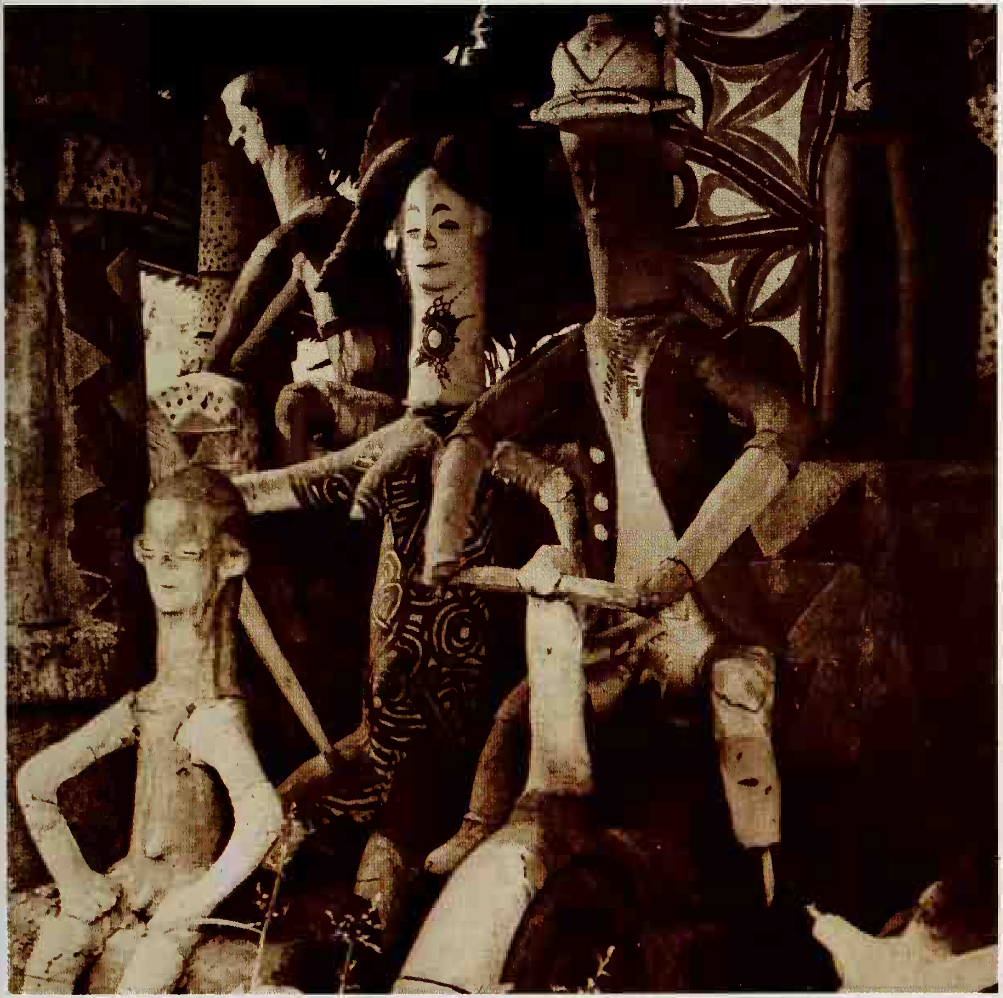
While Eri was alive, the priests continued, he and his dependants were fed by Chuku and their food was sky-substance. Those who ate of it never slept. When Eri died, this food supply ceased and Ndri, Eri's son who had founded Aguleri, complained to Chuku that there was no food. Chuku replied that if Ndri were to slay and bury his eldest son and daughter he could obtain food from their graves. Ndri said this was impossible. Chuku then sent Dioka from the sky to Ndri to carve certain patterns (called *ichi* patterns) on the faces of these two children. Thereafter Ndri was to cut their throats and to bury them in separate graves. Ndri did so. Three Ibo weeks later plant shoots appeared from these graves. From the grave of his son Ndri dug up a yam, cooked and ate it and fell asleep. When he woke up his family were astonished and said they thought he had died. He told them what he had done, and they also ate of the cooked yam and fell asleep.

The next day Ndri dug up *koko* yams from his daughter's grave, ate them and likewise slept. For this reason the yam is called the son of Ndri and the koko yam the daughter of Ndri. When a man takes up the post of *eze* Ndri, that is the kingship, he does not have to slay his first-born son and daughter, though both have the ichi pattern carved on their faces.

Chuku told Ndri to distribute this food to all mankind. Ndri demurred, saying it was obtained by the death of his first-born children. Chuku insisted and stated that in return Ndri and his descendants would have the right of cleansing every Ibo town of abominations or breaches of taboo, of crowning the king at Aguleri, of tying the ankle cords whenever a man took the title of *ozo* or immortality; Dioka's descendants would carve the ichi pattern on their faces.

M. D. W. Jeffreys





Ndri and his descendants would also have the right of making the magical yam 'medicine' each year for ensuring a plentiful supply of yams in all surrounding towns. For these and other privileges the surrounding Ibo would pay tribute to Ndri and his descendants. So Ndri distributed the yams and the koko yams and in this way mankind was supplied with food.

Ndri introduced the system of ranking titles. He became the first eze Ndri or divine king while other individuals took and continue to take the title of *eze ozo* after him and in memory of him.

The carving of the ichi pattern on the faces of the son and daughter of the divine king shows clearly the sun cult pattern of Ibo religion. A drawing done by an untutored, illiterate Ibo was explained as representing the moon, the sun and the wings and tail of the hawk. Another design may be compared with, for instance, the Hittite winged solar disc where sun, moon, wings and tail of the hawk are displayed. It is accepted that this design was borrowed from Egypt, where the pharaoh wore on his head a golden diadem known as the winged solar disc. There is no gold available to the Ibo who instead has the same pattern marked on his head and so conforms with the essential requirements of a sun cult. This pattern is restricted to certain Ibos: the divine king, his eldest son and daughter, and those men who take the highest ranking title, namely the ozo title.

The name Chuku or Chiuku can be separated into *uku* 'great' and *chi* or *chu* 'sky being'. Chuku has three aspects or qualities: Chuku, Anyangwu and Agbala. Anyangwu means 'eye of the sun': Agbala splits up into *agba* 'female' and *ala* 'earth' and may mean 'mother earth', 'fertility'. The Umundri declare that there is only one Supreme Being and that there is no image or representation for Chuku's aspects whereas there are representations for *alushi* (children of the sun) or patron deities of villages or persons, and no shrine or special priest allotted. These concepts are abstract.

There is, however, a special cult object, the *ofo* (a small wooden image) owned by the Umundri and conferred when the ozo title is conferred upon an individual. This object must be held in the hand and pointed at the sky when prayers are offered. The ofo is thus the outward and visible sign that the holder has the right of audience with the ancestors and through them with the deity.

The ofo is the medium through which the owner obtains spiritual audience with the supernatural and without which no Ibo is entitled to enter the presence of the ancestors. He cannot pray effectively without this liaison between himself, the Supreme Being and the departed. Men not

Far left **Ibo divine king: he wears a crown of light white feathers, and a robe made from special blue cloth *Above* Ibo temple in eastern Nigeria: stylized figures are painted on the walls and skulls from sacrifices hang from the lintel *Left* Painted clay sculptures: the female figure in the centre is the Earth Mother, and beside her is an effigy of a white man riding a motor cycle**

entitled to own the ofo suffer the second death, in that after their death they become the forgotten. Through the ofo a man establishes his connection with the immortals and is assured while alive of immortality after death. Hence the striving to take the top ranking title ozo. The titled men dominated and controlled Ibo society. The custody of the ofo remains in the line of descent from the ancestor who acquired it.

The divine Umundri kingship does not go by descent, though the king must come from one of the recognized royal families. Technically, he has no brothers or sisters. The ancestral spirits indicate who is to be the next eze Ndri, often after a long period during which there is no ruler. At the time of his coronation, he must be without parents.

His coronation ceremony contains many elements of a sun cult where the office is immortal. The ceremony opens with a symbolic death, burial and resurrection. The ofo holders assemble under the guidance of the Okpala Okaka, or head of the Adama lineage, who is the custodian of the royal regalia and master of ceremonies.

The divine king-to-be is stripped, washed, rubbed over with red camwood, wrapped in burial clothes and laid out in a shallow grave in his own house. The grave is lined with *iroko* planks while the Okpala Okaka, holding an ofo, prays: 'You who are about to enter the grave, rise up again with a white and shining body. May no harm befall you. Rise as previous divine kings have arisen.' A plank is placed over the grave and earth is thrown on its top. The candidate's family now go into mourning, his wives donning the garb of widows. At the foot of his tree of life a goat and a fowl are sacrificed; the tree is then cut down and burnt. This destruction of the tree of life is the recognized sign that its owner is dead. When eventually the man does die there is no mourning ceremony. He is entombed in a special tomb and is said to have gone back to the sun.

The man is left in the grave till sunset when men from the Adama lineage exhume him. A banana stem replaces the body in the grave, which is filled in. The man has now left his family home for ever. Standing on a bull-hide, he is stripped of his grave-clothes and is washed with water from a sacred lake. Then his body including the hair of his head is smothered in a coating of white clay. He thus fulfils the prayer that he should rise with a white and shining body.

Re-creating the World

Henceforth he must wear only special white or blue cloth. Copper greaves are placed on his ankles but, strangely, he remains barefooted. He is now regarded as a sky-being or god, and his body is sacred. Only members of the Adama lineage may touch him or his belongings. All his servants must now come from this lineage. His food is prepared by a pre-adolescent boy of this group who, as he approaches puberty, is replaced by a younger lad.

The new king, whitened, now proceeds on his circumambulation which, beginning and ending at the sacred town of Aguku, takes several months. Mounting a special termite mound to pray to Chuku and ancestors is the first step. He eats food alone, in silence in a palm-leaf booth. Gods do not need terrestrial food, so no one sees him eat.

On reaching Aguleri he sits on a heap of stones and publicly consumes white clay presented to him in the form of rays. It is significant that he eats that which caused his body to be white and shining. Writing of the Egyptian dead, A. E. W. Budge stated: 'Those who chose the Boat of Ra sailed with him over the skies, they fed upon light and were arrayed in light; . . .' One recalls that in the origin myth of the Umundri, Eri was fed by Chuku on sky-substance or light.

At Aguleri, as the new divine king, he must prove his divinity by re-creating the world, by raising a lump of white clay from the waters of the Anambra creek. A sacrifice is made on the river bank. The new king points his ofo over the water and prays that all dangers be removed. Whereupon a man plunges in to the water to bring up a lump of white clay. In this way the new king re-creates the world and therefore the world is his. This lump of clay, retrieved from the waters, has its counterpart in the orb of other coronation ceremonies.

On his return to Aguku, which he will never leave again, he lives a year in a palm booth while a new palace and temple are built. An Ibo week after his return he demonstrates his control over the food supply: sacrifices are made, holding his ofo the king prays, an oil palm obligingly flowers, fruits and ripens in one day, and the oil is distributed for sacrifices for fertility.

Corry Bevington

Head-dress worn at an annual ceremony to propitiate the Earth Mother; the custom was abandoned at the end of the 19th century

The king's enthronement in the temple upon a stool on an earth dais covered with cow-hides and containing the skull of his predecessor is preceded by a ritual combat against youth and age. Then follows the presentation of the regalia, brass face mask, sacred spear, the ofo and the lump of clay or orb. The Okpala Okaka, ofo uplifted, invokes long life and prosperity, and invokes ancestors to abide with and guide the king, who is exhorted to conduct himself as his predecessors have done. After this comes the crowning of the king by the Okpala Okaka who places on his head a cow-hide diadem adorned with eight white plumes from the fish eagle. This crown is buried with him. The king now mounts the throne and announces his new name. He is, however, saluted by the term Igwe or Sky.

As soon as he has been crowned a wide road is made from the temple to the main road of the town. The entrance to the temple is through an arch of triumph where today the sacrifice of a cow replaces that of a human. The rest of the day is spent in feasting and games. The king now occupies his throne daily all day for 12 days during which time delegates from surrounding areas come to make obeisance to him.

The next step is the ceremonial establishment of the markets. Four sacred stakes are driven into four cylindrical mounds about six feet apart in the courtyard of the palace. Each stake is tied to the next with palm-leaf fibre. A fowl is sacrificed at each stake, each of which receives a name from each day of the four-day Ibo week. The king has now completed the ritual by which a human man is converted into an immortal god.

There is another cult object among the Ibo traceable to the sun cult of Egypt, a ram head image called Ihenga. In 1878 A. Burdo, describing the cult objects of the Ibo chief of Oputa on the Niger wrote: 'At the end of the room there was a ledge, near which were placed three wooden idols, curiously painted; a sort of *lares* (household deities), called Tshi, Ikenga and Ofo' (*The Niger and the Benue*, 1880).

P. A. Talbot in 1926 wrote that 'another protective spirit, worshipped by most of the Ibo sub-tribes is Ikenga . . . It is the genius of a man's strength and of his fortune' (*The Peoples of Southern Nigeria*, 1926). Margaret Murray in *The God of the Witches* (1933) remarked: 'The chief of the horned gods of Egypt was Amon . . . He is usually represented in human form wearing the curved horns of the Theban ram.' These parallels between the Umundri religion and that of ancient Egypt are sufficient to establish the Umundri religion as a sun cult that has been diffused from Egypt.

M. D. W. JEFFREYS

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Chris Barker

By a complex manipulation of yarrow stalks, one of 64 possible hexagrams is obtained; the inquirer then consults the appropriate section of the *I Ching* for the answer to the question in his or her mind

It is said that this ancient Chinese source of wisdom, which has been used for divination for thousands of years, yields astonishingly apt counsel to the serious inquirer but gives a random or even a rude reply to the frivolous.

I CHING

PROBABLY THE OLDEST extant book in the world, the *I Ching* or *Book of Change* is certainly one of the most extraordinary. This abstruse Chinese classic is known to English readers by several names. *I Ching* (pronounced Ee Jing) is the official romanized Mandarin spelling, while *Yee King*, *Yik King* and so on are spellings representing certain Chinese dialects. Often called the *Book of Changes*, its title is better rendered in the singular form; either would suit the Chinese characters equally well, but its authors were concerned with the principle of everlasting change which governs the exquisitely balanced universal harmony; the transient individual changes that result are of secondary importance. Although this ancient work has long been used primarily for divination, it is revered also as a source of religious wisdom and as containing in a highly cryptic form the quintessence of an ancient philosophy.

For well over 2000 years, philosphers have been debating the purpose and meaning of the *I Ching*. The discrepancies in the various English versions are anot inappropiriate indication of the profundity of the Chinese text. Its hoary antiquity, its extreme terseness (remarkable even for an ancient Chinese text) and the mystical nature of its contents all combine to make it highly enigmatic.

Chinese scholars who have devoted whole decades to its study disagree on many fundamental points; and the scores of Chinese commentaries, both ancient and modern, are similarly at variance with one another. It is indeed quite possible that the enigmas are intentional, that the *I Ching*, like many other mystical works, was written in a secret language whose significance was revealed only to initiates.

Deserving 50 Years' Study

That it was immensely important in ancient times is apparent from what Confucius has to say about it. He tells us that the leather thongs binding the tablets on which his copy was incribed 'thrice wore out' from constant use and that, could his life have been prolonged, he would have given 50 years to studying it, thereby perhaps becoming a man 'without grave fault'. What use he made of it is not recorded. While he may have loved it wholly for its deep insight into the mysterious workings of the universe, he may also have esteemed it as a practical book of divination. What is certain is that it came to be included among the 'Four Books' and 'Five Classics', which, for nearly 2000 years were required study for Chinese candidates taking part in the all-important Imperial Civil Service Examinations.

There have been stern scholars who believed that so lofty a classic was shockingly besmirched by being put to use by soothsayers. For all that, it is certain that it has been used for divination since before the days of Confucius (550-480 BC). Certainly it owes much of its reputation – now swiftly extending to the West – to the surprising accuracy claimed for its predictions. Today in China, Japan, Korea and Vietnam – the four countries where scholars readily understand the Chinese script – there are countless people, ranging from pious mystics to street fortune tellers, who peer into a future revealed by means of its curious diagrams

The present Chinese government, in its campaign against 'ancient superstitions', may well have banned its use but it would not be surprising to learn that Communist generals and administrators still secretly seek its advice. They will know, for example, that in 17th century Japan Yamaga built up the Samurai into the finest fighting force in Asia by teaching them a type of strategy that accorded with an interpretation of the *I Ching*. Though it is not a military book, it teaches how all activities benefit from being made to harmonize with the universal cycles of everlasting but orderly change, involving advance and retreat, progress and retrogression, each in due season.

A System of Diagrams

The *I Ching* is the product of a religion that antedates both Confucianism and Taoism (see CHINA; TAOISM) and goes back to the very beginning of Chinese civilization. According to its teaching, the womb of the universe is a limitless, imperceptible void – T'ai Chi, the Absolute. In it all objects have their being and each owes its transient individuality to a particular combination of Yin (negative) and Yang (positive).

A system of diagrams illustrating this concept is attributed to Fu Hse, who is said to have lived 30,000 years ago. Even assuming that he never existed or that so vast a stretch of time is a fanciful exaggeration, the fact remains that the diagrams are perhaps more ancient than any others in the world. Probably these diagrams had already existed for thousands of years when, if the traditional belief is accepted, King Wen (c1150 BC) and his son Duke Chou provided each of them with an explanatory text. Modern scholars believe the text to have been produced at a later period, but it cannot have been much later, as Confucius regarded it as belonging to high antiquity. This text, coupled with a commentary written either by Confucius or by some of his disciples, forms the work as it now stands. Since Confucius lived some 2500 years ago, the main text must be somewhere between 2500 and 3100 years old and the commentary just about 2500.

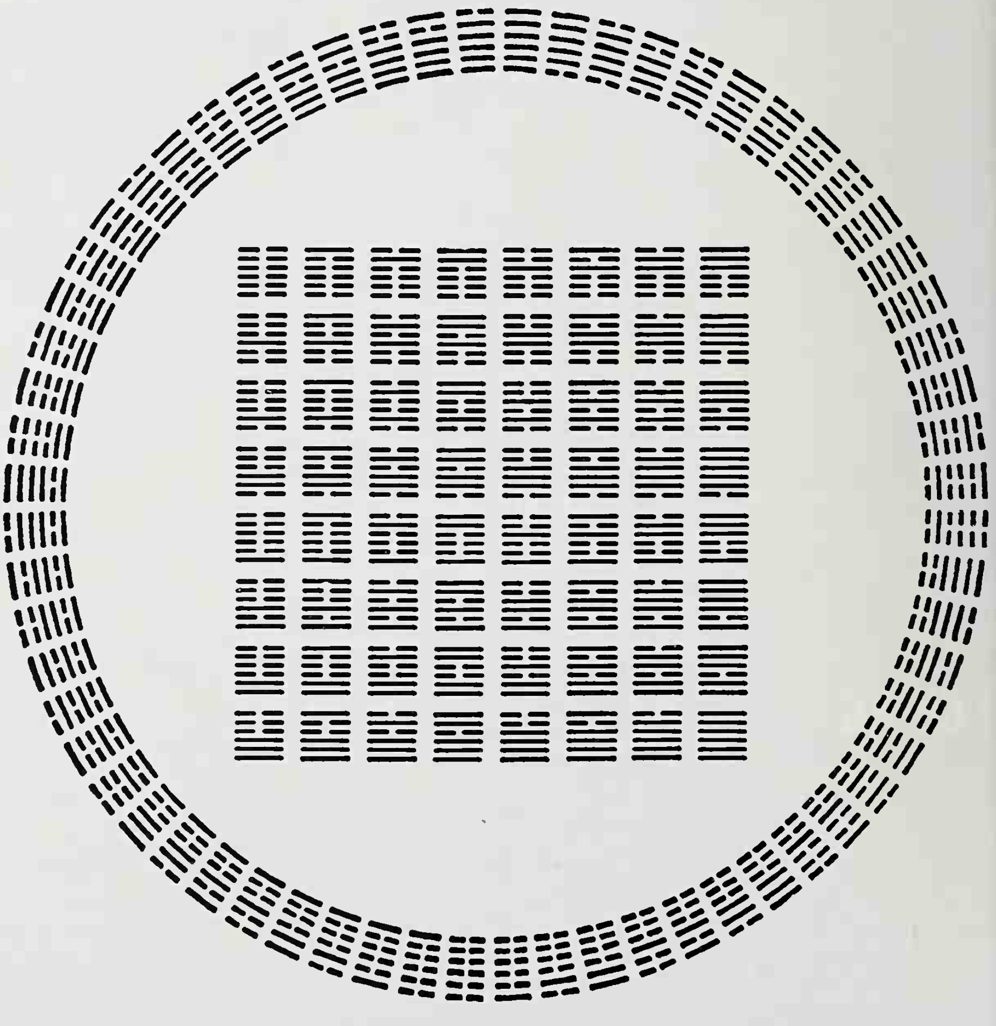
The main body of the book consists of 64 sections, each headed by a different diagram in the form of a hexagram (a figure made up of six broken or unbroken lines). The hexagram is followed by a short text attributed to King Wen. Here is an example: 'Integrity. Sublime success. Righteous persistence brings rewards. Those opposed to righteousness meet with harm. It is not favourable to have any goal (or destination) at this time.' Next follows a terse Confucian commentary which amplifies the meaning of the text and usually explains how it came to be derived from the hexagram. Then comes a brief note on the symbolism and its implications: 'This hexagram symbolizes thunder rolling across the whole earth: from it all things receive their integrity. The ancient rulers gave abundant and timely nourishment to all.' So much for the hexagram as a whole. Next come notes on each of its separate lines, attributed to Duke Chou: 'Line 1. Moving onward with integrity brings good fortune.' Each note is followed by a Confucian commentary on the line text: 'What is willed comes to pass.'

Obviously a book containing so many sections, each composed of terse aphorisms, does not make for smooth reading. There are readers who, believing that an inner significance relates the parts to one another, read and re-read the book from cover to cover as regularly as devout Christians read the Bible. But mostly it is read in connection with the act of divination.

The soothsayer (who may be anyone at all) burns incense, prostrates himself thrice before the silk-wrapped book and, by a complicated manipulation of yarrow stalks (a plant also used for divination in the West) or by tossing three coins six times, receives in answer to the question in his or her mind one hexagram – or in many cases two of them, usually with the emphasis directed to one particular line.

As there are 64 hexagrams, each capable of giving seven answers (either with reference to one of the six lines or without emphasis on any of them), the total number of basic answers is 448. As two hexagrams are often drawn and more than one line may be stressed, the number of possible answers is much larger. They are considered sufficient to take care of any eventuality, though in one sense all of them are

A diagram traditionally attributed to Fu Hse. It is considered a symbol of heaven, represented by the circle, and earth, represented by the square



variations on just four themes – proceed energetically, proceed with caution, stop, or go back.

In another sense this is a gross over-simplification, for almost every word in the text, the commentary, the note on symbolism and the individual line or lines particularly stressed is carefully weighed for its bearing on the question and on the circumstances governing both question and inquirer. Because of the seemingly mechanical means of obtaining a hexagram, this method could be dismissed as fortune telling of the most arbitrary sort were it not for at least two special characteristics.

First and foremost, the *I Ching* does not regard the future as fixed, so that ordinary fortune telling is out of the question. The answers tell the inquirer, not what will happen, but how he or she should act. Secondly, the book's high moral tone makes it quite useless to people who intend to act from selfish motives. The answer 'cautious progress' does not mean that the inquirer will act in that way, which is what a fortune teller would be likely to imply, nor does it mean that to progress cautiously would be to the inquirer's immediate material advantage. What it does mean is that, under the circumstances, it would be morally right to do so and therefore it would redound to his ultimate good and perhaps also to his immediate advantage, in the higher sense.

However, where impersonal objects, events or forces are involved, there is indeed a powerful element of prediction, for it is assumed that normally all things, unless disturbed by deluded man, progress in accordance with the cycle of events to which each belongs. Yet even where such predictions do suggest fortune telling, the moral tone of the book still sets it quite apart from what is usually understood by divination. Again and again there are references to 'the Superior Man', whom the inquirers are expected to take as their model.

The one seemingly crude aspect of the whole process is that, mathematically speaking, the manipulation of the yarrow stalks or of the three coins produces results apparently just as random as those that would be achieved by the ordinary tossing of a coin. However, Western sceptics who feel inclined to dismiss such divination contemptuously may be deterred by C.G. Jung's preface to Richard Wilhelm's German translation of the *I Ching*, in which it is apparent that the eminent Swiss psychologist was convinced of the value of its predictions. Unfortunately his explanation of 'how it works' is less satisfactory than his description of 'what it does'. One gathers he had faith in the *I Ching*'s ability to foretell many of our actions quite accurately, and attributed this ability to the fact that the images it employs relate to the collective unconscious and make a powerful though perhaps imperceptible appeal to us to act or expect things to happen in a certain way. His attempt to explain the mechanics of the oracle is by no means clear. The traditional explanation is that what happens to the yarrow sticks or coins while held in or falling from the inquirer's hands is not at all accidental, but bears a relationship to the cycle of events to which the answer belongs.

Reading the Military Mind

It is doubtful if anyone in Mao Tse-tung's China is encouraged to read the *I Ching*, unless as part of a course in ancient literature – yet I should be only mildly surprised to learn that the strategy of his generals owes something to its inspiration . . .

My interest in the *I Ching* was fully awakened towards the end of 1962 at about the time when hostilities between India and mainland China commenced in the Tibetan border region...As I had been very happy both in China and in India and felt a keen affection for both peoples, I was deeply disturbed; finally, in a spirit of sincere enquiry, I consulted the Book of Change. The answer was so contrary to other people's predictions that I decided to write it down word for word...

An army in the hills (the Chinese) was looking down upon the marshy plain below (India). If its leaders were wise, they would halt their attack at the very moment when everything was going well for them, refrain from advancing further and perhaps withdraw in some places. A week or two later, this is precisely what happened.

Moreover, the *I Ching* had given reasons for this advice, namely that the lines of communication were already too long for safety; that the opponent (India) was likely to receive powerful support from its friends; that the moral value of calling a halt before any necessity for it became generally apparent would be greater in the long run than fresh military gains; and several other reasons which I cannot now recall.

I remember that every one of them was later adduced in newspaper articles to explain the unexpected behaviour of the Chinese and I vividly recall the astonishment of my friends when I showed them what I had written down in advance of the newspapers. It could of course be claimed that a good deal of the accuracy of my answer was due to my particular interpretation of the actual words below the two hexagrams and the two moving lines involved; but, as I had not at all expected the Chinese to call a halt or reasoned out the possible reasons for their doing so, it is hard to see how I could have made myself the dupe of autosuggestion.

John Blofeld
The Book of Change

As it is impossible to demonstrate such a relationship, there will always be scoffers – Chinese as well as Western. However, doubters open-minded enough to persist for a while in using the *I Ching* are, it is said, often astounded by the accuracy of the answers and by their sometimes extraordinary appositeness both to the question and to the surrounding circumstances.

According to a commonly accepted belief, it does not take long to discover that the responses are random or even discourteous when the act of divination is performed for fun; whereas they are most likely to be strikingly correct when 'diviners' act in all seriousness and when, while putting questions and interpreting the answers, they allow their minds to enter a state similar to that reached in the early stages of Buddhist or yogic meditation. From this one may infer that Jung was perhaps right in supposing that the symbols and words which constitute the oracle convey messages directly to the mind, at a level beyond everyday consciousness.

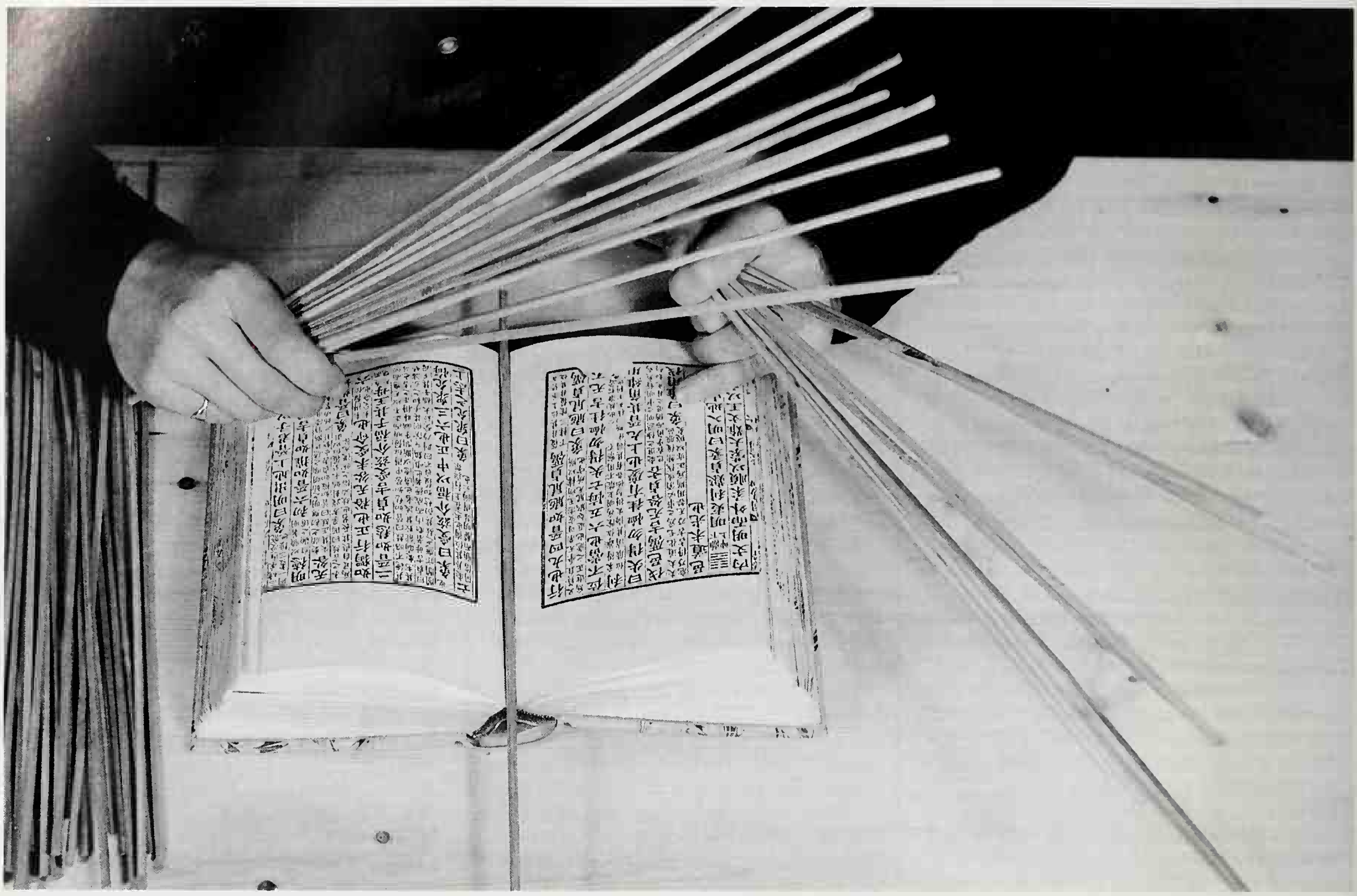
It is apparent that the Book of Change is wholly concerned with the attainment of inner serenity and of harmony with man's surroundings and not at all with material success, except to the extent that, in a universe governed by moral law, material success may well be the ultimate result of righteousness. There are Chinese philosophers and mystics who read it for its spiritual counsel, using it less often (if at all) for divination, and they appear to be untroubled by the disjointed nature of the aphorisms. Perhaps they really are able to discern a sublime pattern hidden from ordinary readers. Chinese tradition claims that the book reveals the secret workings of the universe; also, that its careful study would lead a man to live a blameless life largely free from frustration, because all his thoughts and actions would be in serene accord with the mystical order of being that governs the activities of the ants and the bees, the smooth progress of the seasons and the majestic movements of the stars.

A Variety of Versions

Of several available translations in English, Legge's was produced about a century ago, under the inevitable handicaps of those days – lack of dictionaries and reference books and of learned teachers fluent enough in English to check what he wrote. It is an extremely literal translation and thereby doubly puzzling. Richard Wilhelm's, rendered into English from his German version, is on the whole excellent; it is marred by a few sentences of which the sense is far from clear, but that is perhaps to be expected in a book designed for use as an oracle. His notes and explanatory chapters are most valuable. Blofeld's rendering is less scholarly and has much less detailed explanatory material; it is a popular version with introductory chapters specially written to make the book's use as an oracle as straightforward as possible. A comparison of all three translations reveals discrepancies on every page and there are research scholars, both Chinese and Western, whose interpretations agree with none of those published. Fortunately, faultless accuracy matters somewhat less than in most other books; there is often so little connection between the terse sentences that a mistake made in one is not likely to perpetuate itself in those that follow.

A remarkable observation frequently heard is that all three versions produce satisfactory results when used for divination. This is further evidence in support of Jung's theory that the symbols make a direct communication to the unconscious mind. If this is so, it would seem that errors in the translation (and some small errors or divergencies in the various Chinese editions) are, as it were, by-passed.

JOHN BLOFELD



Fortean Picture Library

In consulting the I Ching, *the practitioner has to generate one or more hexagrams. How are these obtained?*

THE TRADITIONAL METHOD involves the use of 50 sticks, preferably stalks of yarrow, a plant with sacred connotations, which may be found growing widely on common land in China, and until this century was planted on the graves of Confucius and Meng-tse.

1. One stick is set aside, and the remaining 49 are divided into two heaps with the right hand.

2. From the righthand heap, one stick is taken and inserted between the ring and little fingers of the left hand.

3. From the lefthand heap, four sticks at a time are put aside until four or less remain; these remaining sticks are inserted between the ring and middle fingers of the left hand.

4. From the righthand heap, four sticks are set aside in the same way, the residue being inserted between the middle and index fingers of the left hand.

The total number of sticks held in the left hand will now be either 5 or 9 (1+1+3, 1+2+2, 1+3+1 or 1+4+4). These sticks are set aside.

The remaining sticks (either totalling 44 or 40) are mixed together and again divided into two heaps, and picked up according to the same principles as before. In this operation, the total number of sticks taken will be either 4 or 8 (1+1+2, 1+2+1, 1+3+4 or 1+4+3). Once more, they are set aside.

The operation is repeated a third time with the remaining sticks (which may total variously 40, 36 or 32), and these again yield a total of 4 or 8 sticks.

The combination of the three numbers of sticks picked provides one of four kinds of line, which can be represented as follows:

5+4+4	——θ——	‘old’ yang line	‘ritual number’ 9
9+8+8	—— x ——	‘old’ yin line	‘ritual number’ 6
5+8+8 9+8+4 9+4+8	————		‘young’ yang line ‘ritual number’ 7
5+4+8 5+8+4 9+4+4	—— ——		‘young’ yin line ‘ritual number’ 8

This is the first (the lowest) line of the hexagram. The successive five lines are generated in the same way, to give one of the possible 64 (that is, 2x2x2x2x2x2, since each line is either yang or yin) hexagrams.

When the hexagram is made entirely of ‘young’ lines, its interpretation is limited to the judgement of King Wen, the Confucian commentary on the judgment, and the note on the symbolism of the hexagram.

However, ‘old’ lines must be thought of as ‘moving’, or developing into their opposites. The latter part of the text for any hexagram is devoted to an explanation by Duke Chou of the significance of these ‘old’ lines, usually identified (in English translation) as – for example – ‘9 in the second place’ or ‘6 at the top’.

Finally, these ‘old’ lines are envisaged as mutating into their opposites: an old yin into a young yang, and an old yang into a young yin. This results in a second hexagram, for which the judgement, commentary and symbolism should also be read.

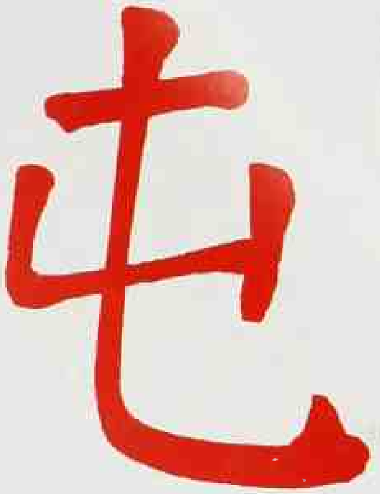
The ritual that has to be gone through to generate a hexagram in this traditional way is time-consuming, and those who regularly consult the *I Ching* – sometimes several times a day – usually employ one of two quicker methods: coins or painted wands.

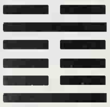
Ancient Chinese coins had an inscribed face and a plain face. If three coins are tossed on to a table, and a value of 2 given to the inscribed side and 3 to the plain side (or respectively to the ‘tails’ and ‘heads’), the total will be either 6, 7, 8 or 9, corresponding to the ‘ritual’ numbers ascribed to the four kinds of line above. It is therefore a matter of moments – six tosses of the three coins – to generate a hexagram, complete with young and moving lines.

As an alternative, six flat wands may be painted solid black on one side (to represent a yang line) and with a white band on the other to represent a yin line. These are wrapped in a mat or cloth, which is then unrolled on a table so that the painted wands immediately form a hexagram. There is no way, however, of identifying ‘old’ or ‘young’ lines by this method.

The 64 hexagrams are regarded as being made up of two trigrams, of which there are eight in all. These each have a number of different symbolic connotations, so that each hexagram represents a combination of two meanings.

For example, the third hexagram, Chun, the symbol of initial difficulty, is made up of the lower trigram Chen, representing





The *I Ching (left)* is probably the oldest book in the world. Each hexagram has its own symbolic significance; for example Chun *(far right)* represents a new shoot struggling to burst its way through the earth in the first days of spring *Below* The eight trigrams of Fu Hse

thunder and awakening, and the upper trigram K'an, representing water and obstruction. The Chinese ideogram for Chun is a picture of a new shoot, struggling to burst its way through the earth in the first days of spring. King Wen's judgment of this hexagram is:

'Initial difficulties are followed by success and prosperity, the result of acting firmly and correctly. Nothing should be attempted unless there is a possibility of success, and it is advantageous to appoint those who can provide appropriate assistance.'

The symbolic significance of Chun attributed to Confucius is that of a raincloud over thunder: the superior man therefore is inspired to put his affairs into proper order.

The Duke of Chou's explanation for any 'old' lines in this hexagram are as follows:

In the bottom line, 9 signifies:
Obstacles and hesitation before action.
Perseverance is rewarding.

In the second line, 6 signifies:
Difficulties increase.
One of the horses breaks free from her wagon.
But he is not a highwayman,
He is one who wishes her to be his wife.
The chaste maiden rejects his advances,
And waits ten years before she bears children.

In the third line, 6 signifies:
He hunts deer in the forest without a guide,
And loses his way.
The superior man, understanding the situation,
Gives up the chase.
To continue brings humiliation.

In the fourth line, 6 signifies:
The horses break from the wagon.
She seeks the assistance of her suitor.
The time is auspicious for going forward.

In the fifth line, 9 signifies:
Obstacles to generosity.
A little perseverance brings success.
Much perseverance brings misfortune.

In the sixth line, 6 signifies:
The horses drag the wagon back.
Tears of blood are wept.

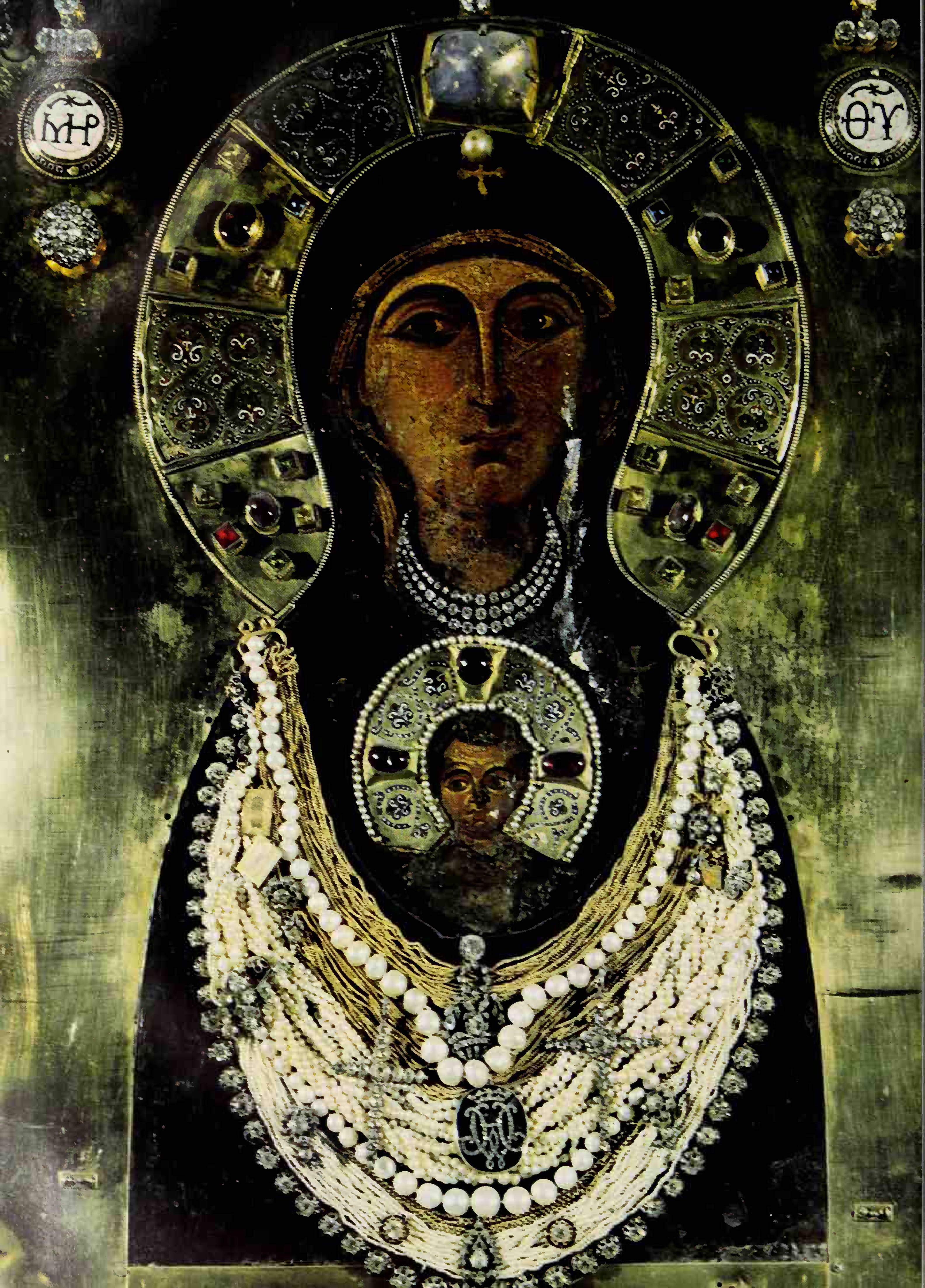
It will be seen that, depending upon how many of the lines are moving lines, it is possible for this hexagram to mutate into any one of the remaining 64, providing a further, complementary, interpretation.

The language in which the *I Ching* is written, and the difficulties posed by its translation, have been the cause of considerable misunderstanding in the West. It is not a predictive text. It is firmly based in Taoist philosophy, and the advice that it gives is much more along the lines of 'if you do this, then that will result'. The 'superior man' who features constantly in the commentary is not a Nietzschean *übermensch* but a sensible person, male or female, who is prepared to accept this advice. Duke Chou's often enigmatic explanations reflect the organization of the Chinese state ten centuries BC, and their interpretation today must be performed with intuition, since they can no longer be taken literally. When these reservations are properly understood, the *I Ching* remains a valuable text for the present-day enquirer.

BRIAN INNES

FURTHER READING: Henry Wei, *Authentic I-Ching* (Newcastle Publishing, 1987); James Legge, *The I Ching* (Dover, 1963); John Blofeld, *The Book of Change* (Allen & Unwin, 1968); Neil Powell, *The Book of Change* (Orbis, 1979).

Ch'ien ☰	heaven	sky	ice cold	early winter	creative active strong light	father	head	horse	purple	northwest
Tui ☱	pool	marsh	mist rain	autumn	joyful pleasurable	youngest daughter concubine	mouth	sheep	blue	west
Li ☲	fire	lightning	sun	summer	clear beautiful depending clinging	middle daughter	eye	pheasant	yellow	south
Ch'en ☳	thunder		thunder	spring	active moving arousing	eldest son	foot	dragon	orange	east
Sun ☴	wind	wood		early summer	gentle penetrating	eldest daughter	thigh	cock	white	southeast
K'an ☵	water	cloud a pit the abyss	moon	winter	labouring enveloping dangerous melancholy	middle son	ear	boar pig	red	north
K'en ☶	mountain		thunder	early spring	stubborn immovable perverse	youngest son	hand fingers	dog	blue	northeast
K'un ☷	earth		heat	early autumn	receptive passive weak dark	mother	belly	cow mare	black	southwest


ΜΗΡ
ΘΥ

ICONOGRAPHY

The urge to make pictures and sculptures of the gods is a human need which has found expression in most religions, although some, notably Judaism, have prohibited it. As Christianity developed, images of Christ, the Virgin and the saints became objects of reverence, sometimes credited with the power to perform miracles

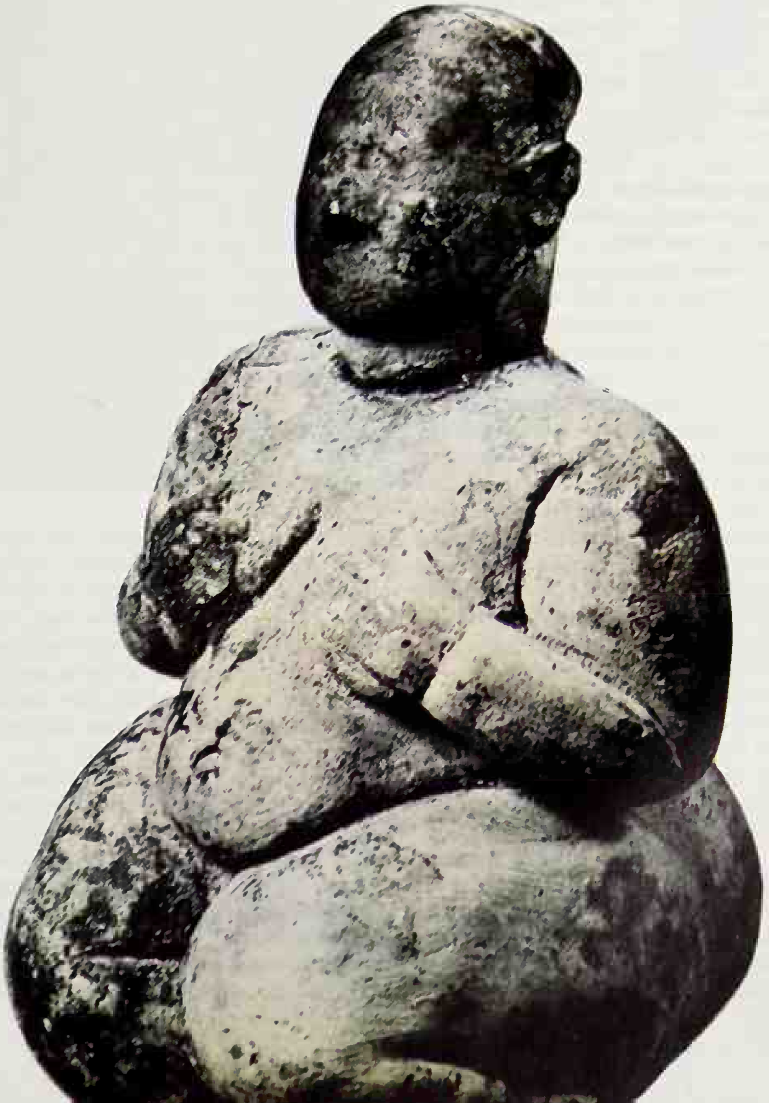
THE HUMAN MIND is so constructed that for most people comprehension of anything implies the ability to picture or visualize it. This is why the understanding of abstract ideas is difficult for the ordinary man. Popular expositors of such subjects as philosophy or physics are successful only when they can find vivid images to serve as analogies to the abstract ideas that they want to explain. In a similar way the idea of deity, or of a particular god, can only be comprehended by most people when they can see a linear or plastic representation of it.

That such a need was felt by man as soon as he became capable of conceptual thinking may be accepted as certain. And the earliest evidence that we have of human culture offers apparent confirmation. For Paleolithic archeology provides two possible examples of the way in which the Old Stone Age peoples (c 15,000 BC) tried to express ideas of supernatural beings whom they conceived of as existent and powerful.

The first example is carved on a slab of rock, found at Laussel, in the Dordogne area of southwest France. It shows the figure of a faceless woman. She is nude, with her maternal features grossly emphasized, and holds a bison's horn in her right hand. The failure to delineate the face must have been deliberate, for such facelessness also characterizes the many female figurines found on other Paleolithic sites (see FACELESS GODDESSES). The makers of such images clearly had the skill to carve facial features but for some reason they refrained. For them the maternal features appear to have been all-engrossing. The Venus of Laussel (to give the figure its customary name) was so positioned, when found, that it had obviously been the centrepiece of a rock sanctuary, probably used for fertility rites. The carving may justly be regarded as the earliest known representation of the mother goddess. We can only guess at the idea that inspired its making. Its emphasis on maternity or fertility doubtless expresses a conception of a creative power, productive of new life, of which the mother was the physical embodiment.

The motive behind the transformation of such an idea into a figure carved from stone represents a problem basic to all religious iconography. In the Venus of Laussel it poses itself for the first time. The idea of a creative power, the source of all life, was presumably a communal idea. But who thought of representing it as a faceless woman? The phenomenon of birth doubtless suggested the figure of the mother. But how came the carved stone figure to be accepted in such a way that it became the cult object of a sanctuary?

We have not the knowledge to answer these questions. But it is important at least to define them, for they represent problems raised by the first images of deity in every religion. The one certain factor in primitive art is the magical aspect of creativity, the fact that to draw a figure or carve one out of stone gives new and significant form to what has previously been formless. Michelangelo,

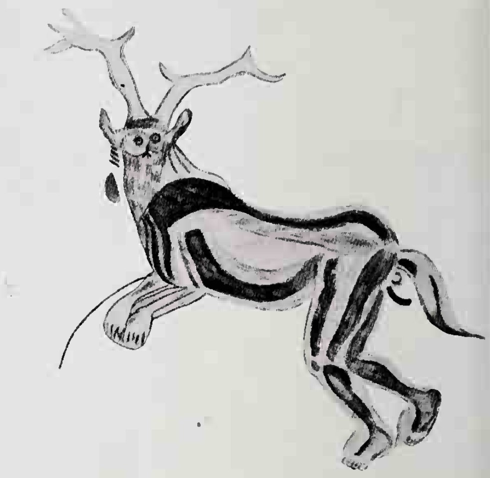


Ankara Museum/Michael Holford

Left **'Our Lady of Victory', a Byzantine icon in St Mark's, Venice, which was believed to have the power of bringing triumph in war. Images of Christ, the Virgin or the saints were regarded as holy in themselves and many of them acquired a reputation for curing disease or warding off misfortune**

Right **A prehistoric 'Venus' from Catal Hüyük: for the makers of these figures the maternal features were all-important, presumably as an embodiment of the power that creates new life**

A strange figure, partly painted and partly engraved, the Dancing Sorcerer may be the earliest known image of a god



thousands of years later, was to think of himself as freeing a spirit imprisoned within stone when he carved his superb figures. The Paleolithic sculptor must surely also have wondered at the strange power that enabled him to bring such a form out of a rock. For once it was carved it was no longer a rock; it was endowed with a new form of being.

The Dancing Sorcerer

That the Venus of Laussel is the earliest known image of a deity there can be little doubt. Its cultic purpose is obvious. But not so obvious is the purpose of another notable product of Paleolithic art, sometimes known as the Dancing Sorcerer. This is a strange figure, partly painted and partly engraved, on the wall of one of the innermost recesses of the so-called cave of the 'Trois Frères' at Ariège, in the Tarn department of southwest France. The figure is roughly human in shape, and its posture seems to depict the action of dancing. It has the antlers of a stag, the eyes of an owl and a long tongue or beard. It has also the hairy pelt, tail and genitals of an animal and is placed high on the wall of the cavern, above drawings of other animals (see HORNS).

There has been much expert discussion about the significance of this curious figure. The name Dancing Sorcerer represents one interpretation. Some scholars have maintained that the figure is that of a sorcerer, disguised as an animal, performing a magical dance. Other prehistorians have suggested that the depiction represents a god, a kind of 'Lord of the Beasts'. They argue that these Paleolithic peoples, who lived by hunting, conceived of a great being which combined the attributes of various animals. It was thought to own all the animals, and so had to be propitiated by the hunters. If this theory could be proved, the so-called Dancing Sorcerer would be the earliest known image of a god, as the Venus of Laussel is the earliest image of a goddess.

The next known examples of divine images date from the seventh millennium BC. They were discovered in the Neolithic settlement at Catal Hüyük, in Anatolia. They represent the mother goddess, with the same emphasis upon the maternal attributes as the Paleolithic prototypes. The sanctuaries in which they were found indicate that the goddess was associated with both life and death. The exact purpose of the images is not clear. One, having the form of a mural bas-relief, seems to have been a cultic object. Much of the adornment of sanctuaries – the mural depiction of a bull and mounted bulls' horns, drawings of human hands, skulls of foxes and vultures, models of female breasts – appears to have had a symbolic meaning.

The religious iconography of the earliest civilized states of the Near East can be traced back to the fourth millennium BC. In Egypt it already shows its characteristic mixture of animal and human forms. The slate palette of the Pharaoh Narmer (c 3200 BC) provides both the earliest and most significant evidence of the fluidity of the Egyptian imagination in portraying deity. On one side of the carved palette the figure of Narmer dominates the scene, as he smites a kneeling enemy. To the right of the king a hawk is depicted, perched on six papyrus plants which grow out of a curious human-headed rectangular object. The hawk has a human right arm, which holds a cable hooked into the nose of the head below. This complex symbolism obviously relates to the Egyptian belief in a royal god, Horus, who took the form of a hawk. The pharaoh was regarded as the incarnation of this divine hawk. The depiction, therefore, may either show Horus as helping Narmer to overcome his enemies, or represent the king as the incarnation of Horus in victorious action. At the top of the palette two cows' heads symbolize the goddess Hathor. On the other side, the pharaoh is shown as a bull breaking up a fortified town and trampling on a foe.

The strange imagery of this famous palette of Narmer provides a clue to understanding the iconography of the Egyptian gods. The fact that on the same object the king can be depicted both in human form and as a bull, and possibly also as the Horus-hawk, reveals that reality for the Egyptians did not reside in the outer form or appearance of a thing.

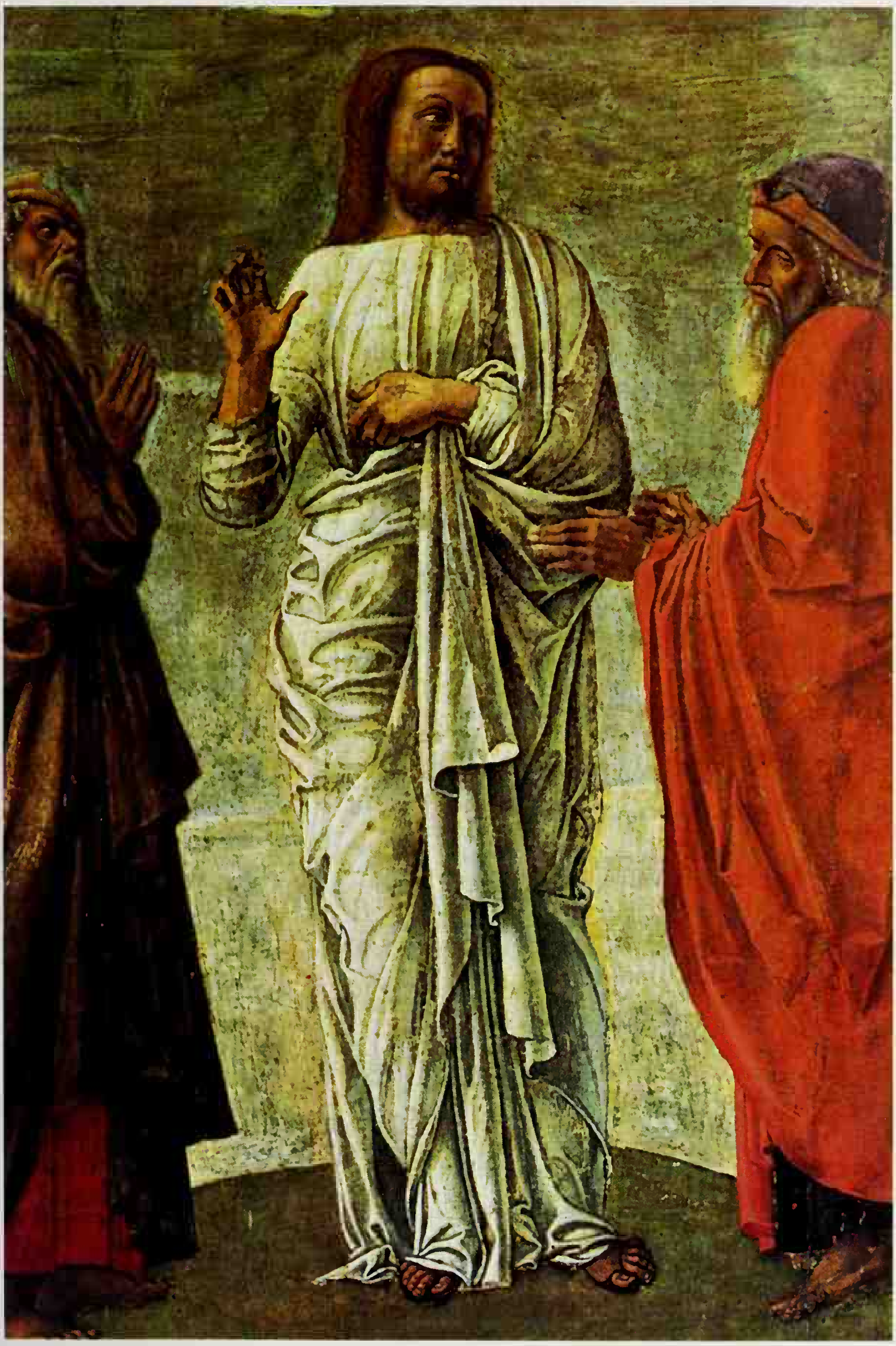
Another significant but more aesthetic example, dating from about seven centuries later, is provided by a sculptured group of King Men-kau-re and two goddesses. All three figures are realistically human. The goddesses wear contemporary Egyptian costume, and might well represent two Egyptian women. Their divine status is denoted by symbols on their heads. Hathor has the horns of a cow, between which is the disc of the sun. The other goddess is a local deity and wears the standard of her district.

Statues Treated as Living

With a few exceptions, most ancient Egyptian deities were portrayed in one of three ways: in human form, with an appropriate symbol on the head; in animal form, usually with a symbol; with human body and animal's head, surmounted by a symbol. Their cult statues, after being made, were endowed with life by a special ritual known as the 'Opening of the Mouth'; the same ceremony was performed on a mummy to reanimate it. In the temples the cult image was regarded as the focus of the divine presence and treated as a living being. It was housed in a special shrine in the innermost sanctuary. Each day it was awakened and fed, and a toilet ceremony was performed. At the great festivals it was carried out of the temple, set on a ceremonial boat borne by priests. In some instances it was taken to visit a neighbouring deity to whom it was considered to be related.

The ancient Egyptians were an intelligent people, and it is difficult to believe that they thought the cult image was really the god. Moreover, images of the gods abounded in Egypt; in the same temple there might be many representations of the chief god besides the cult image. The cult image was the focus of their attention and worship; they treated it as the visible presence of the deity. It was the concrete expression, though symbolically presented, of those qualities which they imagined to be invested in a particular god or goddess.

The religious iconography of the Sumerians, which equals that of Egypt in antiquity, was wholly anthropomorphic; the Sumerians, and the neighbouring Akkadians also, thought of their gods as being of majestic human form. The typical Sumerian god was represented seated, wearing a long robe and a horned head-dress; the number of the pairs of horns which he wore seems to have been the chief index to his status. Usually an appropriate symbol was shown: a crescent moon, for instance, denoted Sin, the moon god. There are, however, two notable exceptions to this Mesopotamian representation of deity. In what has come to be known as the Eye



G. Tomsich, Rome

Louvre/Michael Holford

Top left Drawing of the Paleolithic figure often called the Dancing Sorcerer, some scholars maintain that it represents a magician, others that it depicts a god *Left* Detail from *The Transfiguration* by Giovanni Bellini: the picture of Jesus with a beard and long hair is a medieval convention, and the early Christians visualized Christ as beardless and with close-cropped hair *Above* The Greek idea of deity found satisfaction in the contemplation of superbly beautiful forms and the Greek gods were human beings on a grand scale: the Piombino Apollo

Temple of Brak the deity concerned, possibly the fertility goddess Ninhursag, was symbolized by two eyes. This strange symbol for a goddess seems to have had a wide currency later, becoming a characteristic symbol of Megalithic culture (see EYE). The other exception is provided by two bronze figures found at Ishchali, representing a pair of four-faced deities. Such monstrous features, of which there are parallels in some other religions, may indicate an attempt to show that the god was all-seeing. It is significant that in the *Enuma elish*, the Babylonian creation epic, Marduk, the god of Babylon, is described as having four eyes and four ears.

The gods and goddesses of the other peoples of the ancient Near East were invariably portrayed in human form. Sometimes they were given an appropriate attribute. Weather gods such as Baal, Adad or Reshef, brandish a weapon symbolizing lightning. Fertility goddesses of the Ishtar-Astarte type offer their breasts. An interesting example of religious syncretism or 'borrowing' in art is found on an Assyrian cylinder seal, now in the British Museum. The god Assur is depicted set in a winged sun disc, which was a characteristic Egyptian symbol for the sun god. A similar instance of borrowing occurs in Iranian representations, dating from the 5th century BC, of the supreme deity Ahura Mazdah. The Egyptian winged sun disc had evidently established itself as an attribute or symbol of the supreme deity.

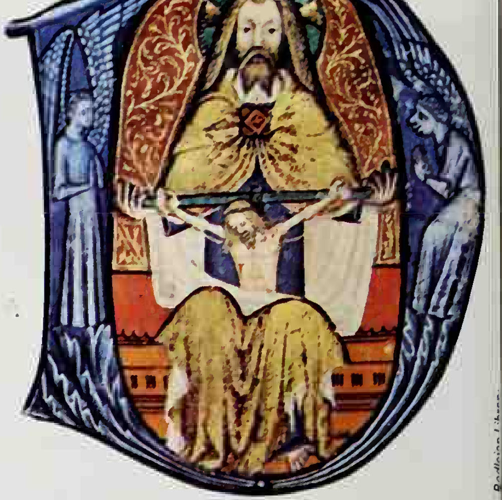
Anthropomorphism also characterizes the religious iconography of ancient Crete. The Great Goddess was depicted in human form, wearing the typical flounced dress of contemporary Cretan women. Some statuettes show her wearing a high tiara, which appears to have been an exceptional ornament that probably indicated her divinity.

That the Greeks conceived of their deities as 'human beings writ large' is common knowledge. Homer's descriptions of the Olympic gods inspired an essentially anthropomorphic conception of them, and his authority sanctioned its realistic presentation. The peculiar Greek sensibility for perfection of form and a restrained harmony, however, soon transformed the archaic images into the assured products of classical

Reproof from an Image

Hard by under a portico there is a statue of St Peter, repentant, and over him there is a cock still crowing . . . This cock is said to have been the chief instrument in a miracle not less noteworthy than any recorded in connection with the Sacro Monte. It seems that on the 3rd of July 1653 a certain Lorenzo Togni from Buccioleto, who had been a martyr to intemperance for many years, came to the Sacro Monte in that state in which martyrs to intemperance must be expected generally to be. It was very early in the morning, but nevertheless the man was drunk, though still just able to go the round of the chapels. Nothing noticeable occurred till he got to the Caiaphas chapel, but here all on a sudden, to the amazement of the man himself, and of others who were standing near, a noise was heard to come from up aloft in the St Peter chapel, and it was seen that the cock had turned round and was flapping his wings with an expression of great severity. Before they had recovered from their surprise, the bird exclaimed in a loud voice, and with the utmost distinctness, "Ciocc' anch' anc'uei." . . . These words I am told mean, "Drunk again today also?" . . . The bird repeated these words three or four times over, and then turned round on its perch, to all appearance terra cotta again. The effect produced upon the drunkard was such that he could never again be prevailed upon to touch wine . . .

Samuel Butler *Ex Voto*



Above The Trinity, from a 14th century psalter: the Father, with the crucified Son in his lap and the Spirit radiating light from his breast *Right* Tibetan Buddha of the 18th century: in early Buddhist art the presence of the Buddha was denoted by his footprints, an empty throne, the wheel of the law, or a riderless horse

art. And we may assume that the Greek conception of deity found satisfaction in the contemplation of such superbly beautiful human forms. This certainly seems to have been so with the famous gold and ivory statue of Zeus at Olympia. It was ranked as one of the Seven Wonders of the World, and created a profound impression on all who saw it. A tradition records the answer of its sculptor Pheidias, when asked how he intended to portray Zeus, the supreme god of the Greek pantheon. He said that he desired to convey in sculpture what Homer had expressed in words: 'The son of Cronus (Zeus) spake, and nodded assent with swarthy brows; the king's ambrosial locks flowed downwards from his immortal head, and he shook great Olympus.' Another celebrated cult image was that of Pallas Athene, in the Parthenon at Athens. The work of Pheidias, this gold and ivory statue was 40 feet in height. It showed the goddess armed with helmet, shield and spear. Her right hand held an image of Nike (Victory), and on her breast was the famous *aegis*, with the Gorgon's head in the centre.

Representations Forbidden

This brief survey of the religious iconography of the ancient world must include a note about the curious Jewish prohibition of images. Its classic statement is in the Second Commandment: 'You shall not make for yourself a graven image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth; you shall not bow down to them or serve them; for I the Lord your God am a jealous God. . .' (Exodus 20.4–5). The prohibition is curious because it ran counter to contemporary religious practice. It was also a departure from the practice of the Israelites themselves, for the Golden Calf described in Exodus, chapter 32, was obviously a cult image of Yahweh. Moreover, it is not consistent with the instructions given for the making of the Ark of Yahweh, since these directed that two golden images of cherubim be made (Exodus 25.18–20). However, the prohibition was gradually established as a basic tenet of Judaism, which became the supreme example of a religion which forbade the representation of the deity in human or animal form; a prohibition followed later by Islam.

With a few rare exceptions, the religious iconography of the ancient Near Eastern peoples and of Graeco-Roman society was restrained in its use of symbolism. Such restraint has not characterized the iconography of Hinduism and the religions of the ancient Central American peoples. Indian art has traditionally sought to represent the diversity of divine power by endowing the divine image with many arms. Thus in the statues of Shiva Nataraja, representing the great god as the manifestation of divine energy, the figure has four arms. Each hand holds an object that symbolizes some essential attribute or makes a significant gesture. The whole figure does in fact constitute a complex exposition of the divine nature. Even stranger and more repulsive are the images of the goddess Kali. She is black and a chaplet of severed heads hangs round her neck; her teeth are hideous fangs and her tongue lolls out. The hands of her four arms hold objects symbolizing both her creative and destructive power, for Kali personifies the ambivalence of deity, which manifests itself, according to Indian tradition, in the unceasing cycle of life and death, creation and destruction.

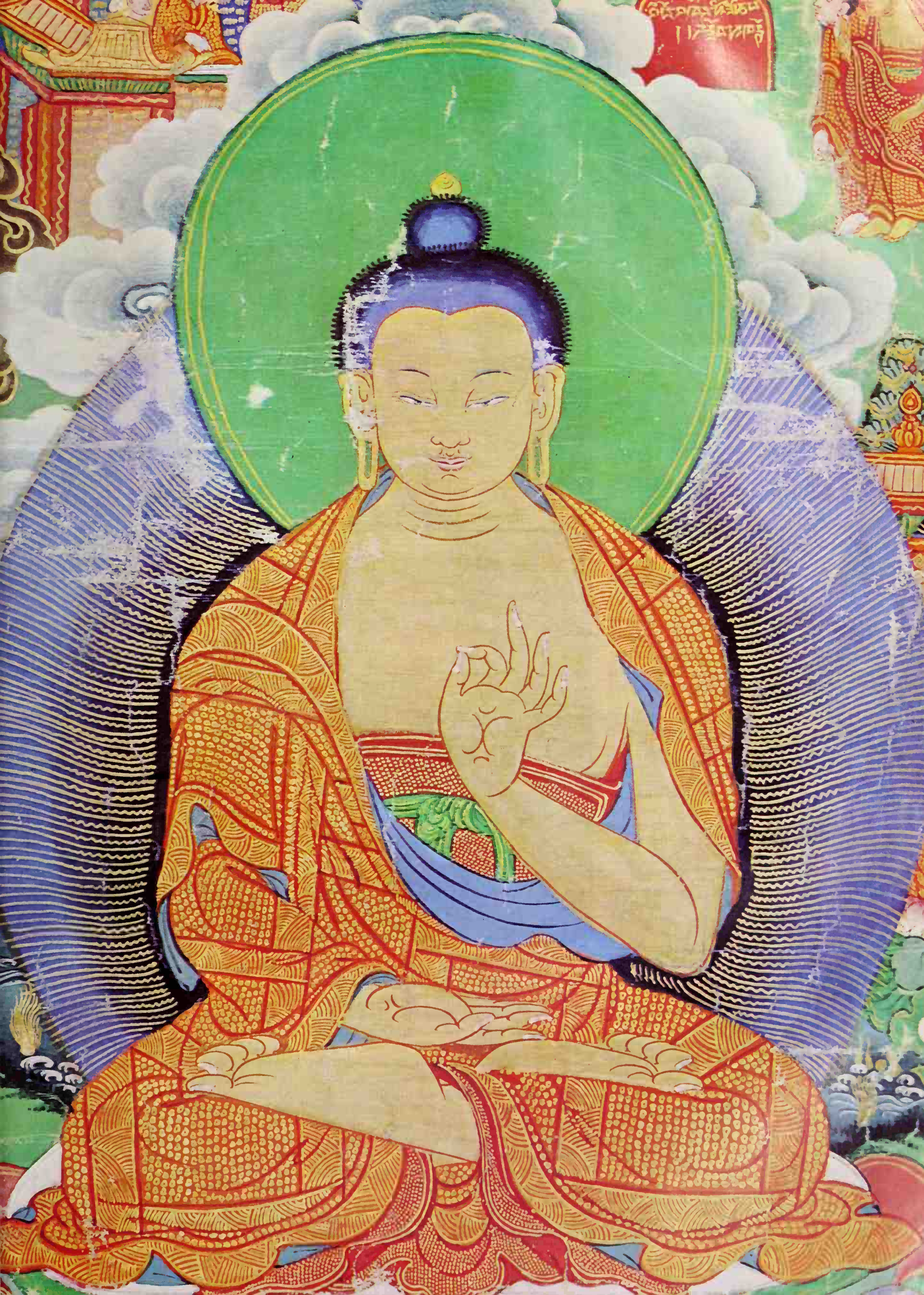
To the non-specialist in ancient American art the representations of Maya and Aztec gods appear even more mystifying than those of the Hindu gods and equally repulsive. The idiom of the art has clearly first to be learned, before its religious iconography can be understood. But even when the imagery becomes familiar, the concept of deity still remains essentially horrific. It is not surprising that gods of such a nature should have required the myriads of human victims that the Aztecs zealously provided.

Buddhist iconography provides interesting evidence of a change of thought about the propriety of representing the Buddha in bodily form. The fundamental tenet of the Buddha's doctrine was that of the necessity of detachment from physical existence in the material world. In the earliest forms of Buddhist art the presence of the Buddha was, accordingly, denoted only by his footprints, or an empty throne, the wheel of the law, or a riderless horse. However, some five centuries after his death images of the Buddha began to appear in northwest India. The change probably reflects the steady transformation of Buddhism into a popular religion. The Buddha became increasingly regarded as a divine saviour incarnated in perfect human form. An iconographic tradition was established concerning the posture of the Buddha's body and the positions of his hands and fingers; each posture or gesture had its own particular significance. The supernatural status of the Buddha figure was also indicated by the nimbus that encircled the head – a symbol that occurs in Hindu, Iranian and Christian iconography. National characteristics have made themselves manifest in the way in which the Buddha is represented: there are distinctive Indian, Tibetan, Southeast Asian, Chinese and Japanese types.

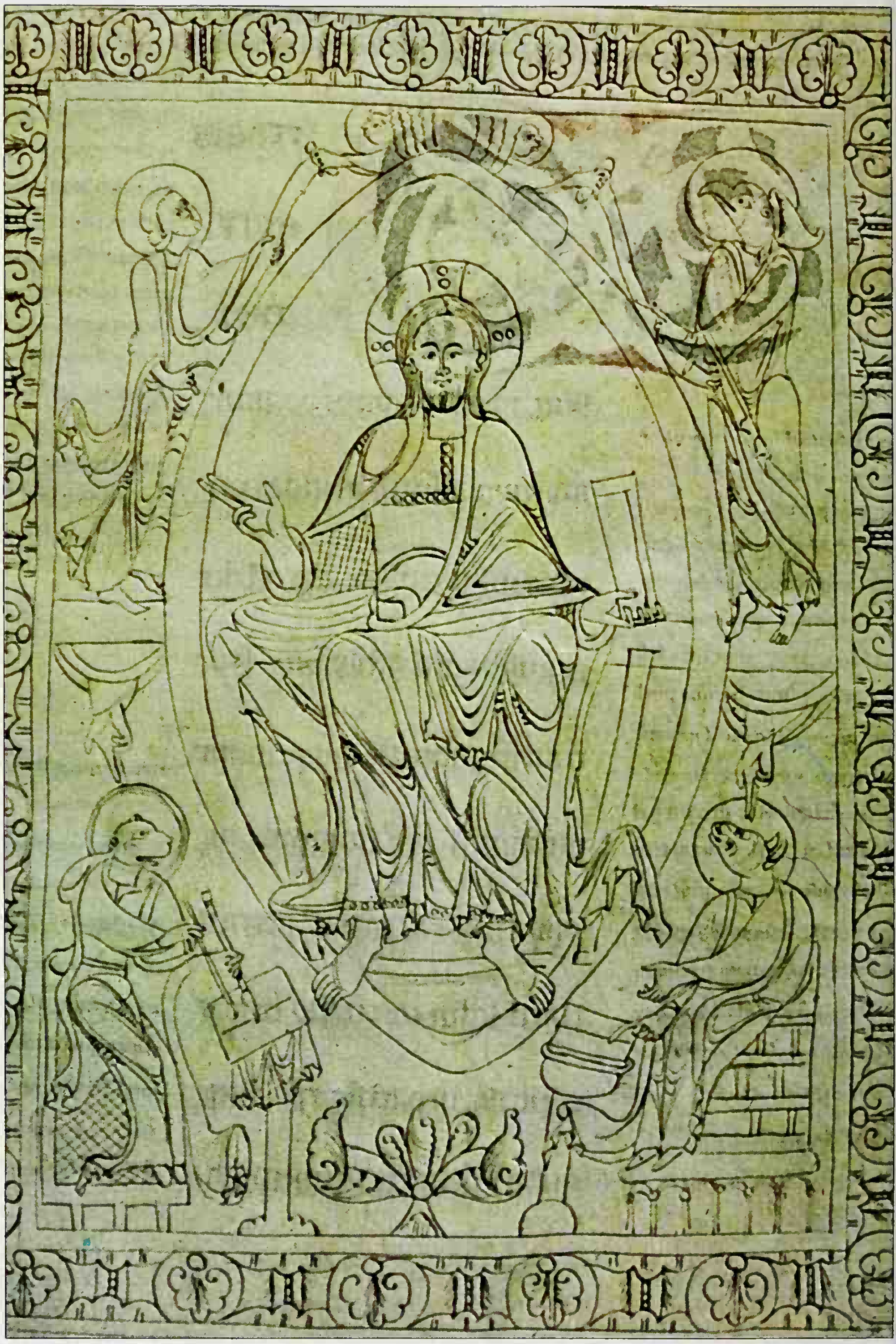
Christian Iconography

The first Christians preserved no record of the physical appearance of Jesus of Nazareth. Such an undertaking, if the idea of it had ever occurred to them, would doubtless have been dismissed as useless. For they were concerned with the future, not the past. They looked forward to the imminent return of Jesus with supernatural power and glory as the promised Messiah of Israel. And when that hope waned after the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 AD, Christians had become more interested in Christ as a divine being than as a man. They did indeed stress the reality of his human nature but this was a doctrinal issue, not the result of interest in 'the historical Jesus'. It is significant that the earliest known description of the physical appearance of Jesus, the so-called *Letter of Lentulus*, is a 13th century forgery. The true situation was frankly stated by the great scholar and theologian, St Augustine of Hippo, writing about 400 AD: 'We do not know his face, any more than that of his mother'.

But if the original disciples of Jesus, who had seen him, had not been interested in preserving the memory of his physical appearance, later generations certainly felt the urge to portray him in either linear or plastic art. Their purpose, however, was a doctrinal one. It first finds expression chiefly in two forms: in mural paintings in catacombs and in sculptured sarcophagi. The catacomb paintings do in fact provide the earliest



Above Symbol of the Babylonian sun god, Shamash, from a boundary stone of the 9th century BC: the winged disc was also a characteristic Egyptian symbol for the god of the sun
Right Early medieval English manuscript showing the four evangelists, Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, around Christ; in Christian art the traditional symbols of the evangelists are respectively the man, lion, ox and eagle



specimens of Christian iconography, beginning about 200 AD.

Because the catacombs at Rome were burial-places, the Christians chose subjects for depiction there that symbolized divine salvation. The subjects were taken from both the Old and New Testaments. Among the former the story of Jonah was most frequently used: Jonah's being thrown to the sea monster and his subsequent deliverance provided a graphic analogy of salvation, which had been sanctioned by Christ's use of the incident as an allegory of his Resurrection. The New Testament subjects chosen were relatively few: the baptism of Christ, the miracle at Cana, the multiplication of the loaves, the healing of the paralytic man and the resurrection of Lazarus are the chief. In the scenes no attempt was made to represent Jesus as a 1st century Palestinian Jew. He is generally portrayed as a young beardless man, wearing a long robe of the toga type. The Crucifixion is never depicted in the catacombs, and there is only one problematic scene of the Passion, namely, the Crowning with Thorns and Mocking of Christ. The accent in the catacombs is clearly on salvation and new life. The Good Shepherd figure appears often, but it is doubtful whether it always represents Christ (see GOOD SHEPHERD).

Resemblance to Jupiter

The catacombs offer few examples of what might be specifically called a portrait of Christ. One occurs in the catacomb of Commodilla, dating from the 4th or 5th century; it shows a majestic bearded face, with luxuriant hair, and is reminiscent of contemporary statues of Jupiter. The head is encircled by a nimbus, and the Greek letters alpha and omega indicate that it represents the eternal omnipotent world-ruler. Another example of the adaptation of pagan iconography was found in the excavations beneath St Peter's, Rome. It appears to be a mosaic depiction of Christ as Helios (the sun), together with the sun chariot; it probably dates from about the 4th century.

The sculptured sarcophagi, used for the burial of the dead and dating from the 3rd to the 5th centuries, constitute a rich treasury of early Christian iconography. On them Christ is invariably depicted beardless and in Roman costume. Among the scenes additional to those portrayed in the catacombs are the triumphant entry into Jerusalem, the arrest and trial of Christ. One of these sarcophagi is particularly notable for its representation of the Resurrection. The subject is treated with an interesting mixture of reality and symbolism. The trial before Pilate and the carrying of the cross by Simon of Cyrene are shown realistically but the centre panel presents a large cross, surmounted by a laurel crown of victory, inset with the Chi Rho symbol, a sacred monogram representing the first two letters of the Greek word for Christ; beneath the cross two sleeping Roman soldiers recall the miracle of the empty tomb.

A sarcophagus, now in the Lateran Museum, deserves special attention for its attempt to portray the creation of Adam and Eve as the combined operation of the Trinity. The triune Godhead is represented as three identical bearded persons. This early essay in the iconography of the Trinity, essentially a difficult subject for pictorial representation, was rarely repeated in later times.

The Crucifixion of Jesus, which had been avoided earlier as a pictorial subject, began

St Godric claimed that he once saw a little boy come out of the mouth of the figure of Christ on a crucifix and sit in the lap of the nearby image of the Virgin

to figure in Christian art from the 5th century; but it remained for many centuries a comparatively rarely treated topic. The Church was still primarily concerned with Christ as the divine Saviour, whose transcendental significance far outweighed that of the few years of his earthly life. But the depiction of the events of that life becomes more frequent, doubtless because they provided graphic themes for the teacher and the artist. Indeed the purpose of their representation was didactic. But with the development of the use of mosaic for mural decoration, scenes from the life of Christ provided suitable subjects both for the ornamentation of church walls and the instruction of the laity. The fine series of such scenes in the nave of San Apollinare Nuovo, Ravenna, executed in the 6th century, are notable examples.

Cult of the Icon

Although the idea of a cult image of Christ similar in purpose to that in pagan temples would have been repudiated as idolatry, the development of the basilica church during this period provided an opportunity for depicting such images, which was fully exploited. The domed ceiling at the eastern end of such churches afforded a large concave area which suggested the vault of heaven, and soon these areas glowed with mosaic representations of Christ. Such majestic figures as those in Santi Cosma e Damiano, Rome, and San Vitale, Ravenna, must have focused the attention of the worshippers so compellingly as to become the object of their devotion.

The popular appeal of holy images steadily grew, especially in the Eastern Church. The need was met by the production of icons, small portable depictions of Christ, the Virgin Mary or various saints. Usually painted on flat boards, they could be used for private as well as for public devotion. They were treated as intrinsically holy, being kissed, bowed to and censed. Many icons acquired a reputation for curing disease or warding off misfortune. Some, such as the icon of Christ of Edessa, were regarded as *acheiropoietos*, 'made without hands'. The cult of the icon provoked a powerful reaction in the Greek Church from c 725 to 842, known as the Iconoclastic Controversy. It started with an edict of the Emperor Leo III, condemning all images as idols and ordering their destruction. After much bitter persecution, the orthodox Christians eventually won and the icons were restored. The first Sunday of Lent is still kept in the Greek Church as the Feast of Orthodoxy, commemorating the defeat of the iconoclastic party.

In the Western Church the use and veneration of images was not seriously challenged until the Reformation in the 16th century. Although officially the nature of the veneration to be paid to images was carefully defined, popular piety often accorded to them a devotion that was indistinguishable from worship. What intensity of devotion could achieve is vividly seen in the case of St Francis of Assisi. He believed that the ancient crucifix in the little church of San Damiano spoke to him, charging him with his fateful mission: 'Go and restore my falling Church'. It may be noted also that from the 9th century the image of Christ on the cross became more realistic, and attention was given to representing the body as tormented to death.

Stories of miracle-working images abound in medieval literature. St Godric, a 12th century English saint, claimed that he once saw a little boy come out of the mouth of the figure of Christ on a crucifix and sit in the lap of the nearby image of the Virgin, who fondled him for three hours. At Château-en-Brie it was reported that a man cursed the image of the Virgin and broke its arm. Blood immediately poured from it, and the miscreant was seized by a demon. That the clergy were not above making wonder-working images was publicly demonstrated by the famous 'Rood of Grace' outside St Paul's, London. Brought up from Kent by Henry VIII's agents, its mechanism for moving the eyes and lips was exposed as evidence of priestly duplicity.

The 'Bible of the Poor'

But in spite of such abuses and popular superstition, iconography played an important educative and cultural role in medieval Christendom. In an age when the mass of the people were illiterate, knowledge about their religion was acquired by verbal instruction and visual illustration. The cathedral and parish church, through their images and paintings, constituted the 'Bible of the poor'. Ordinary folk saw the Trinity represented as a venerable man in papal attire holding the crucifix while the Holy Spirit, as a dove radiating light, emanated from his breast. They were shown how Christ had risen from the tomb after harrowing hell, how he had crowned his mother Mary as Queen of Heaven; and they knew how he would appear at the Last Judgement.

In great churches such as cathedrals the arrangement of the sacred scenes portrayed was carefully planned. At Chartres the main themes depicted were: Christ; Mary; the Church as the Bride of Christ; as Christ's body; and as the community of the saints – with the Eucharist as the divinely ordained link uniting the Church with Christ. Indeed, the medieval cathedral in its layout, sculpture, painted glass and murals, and with the drama of the Mass performed at its high altar, epitomized the universality of Christianity; it seemed to extend from this temporal world to the eternal world of Christ and his saints.

The destruction of images was in the forefront of the programmes of most religious reformers of the 16th century. Although their iconoclasm ended certain abuses, the damage done to the artistic heritage of many countries was irreparable. In Catholic countries the Counter-Reformation exploited the emotive potential of sacred iconography as a stimulus to piety and loyal devotion; El Greco's *Burial of Count Orgaz* and Bernini's *Ecstasy of St Teresa* are notable examples. The cult of images still flourishes vigorously among Catholic peasant populations in both the Old and the New World, involving many strange practices and curious beliefs.

The influence of the traditional image of Christ remains powerful for both Catholics and Protestants, and indeed even for secularists. The bearded, long-haired portrait which became established by the early Middle Ages has so dominated the imagination that puzzlement, if not shock, is felt when the artist departs from this convention. But it is chastening to reflect that the early Christians visualized Christ as beardless and with a close-cropped head.

S. G. F. BRANDON

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Idol

An image or object representing a divine being; the more sophisticated worshipper may take it as a symbol of the thing reverenced, but at more popular levels of belief the image is thought to possess power in itself and is treated as if it were the god himself, or the abode of a god.

William MacQuitty

Ignis Fatuus

'Foolish fire', the pale flickering light sometimes seen hovering over marshy ground or graveyards; it is thought to be caused by the spontaneous combustion of decaying matter; also called will-o-the-wisp, jack-o-lantern, foxfire, corpse light, friar's lantern, fairy fire; in folk belief, it is ascribed to a mischievous spirit which misleads night travellers, or to fairies or witches; in Germany it is said to be a wandering soul, in Russia the soul of an unborn child; sometimes taken as an evil omen.

See WILL-O-THE-WISP

After his death the name of Ikhnaten, the heretic Pharaoh, was obliterated from the king lists. He had challenged the power of the priests of Egypt by attempting to abandon Egyptian polytheism for the worship of a single divinity, symbolized by the disc of the sun

IKHNATEN

PHARAOH AMENOPHIS IV of the 18th Dynasty of Egypt, who adopted the name of Ikhnaten (or Ikhnaton, or Akhenaten) is the most remarkable individual figure in the history of Egyptian religion. After a period of sometimes excessive admiration, later scholars have sought to reduce his stature. It has been claimed that the introduction of new art forms, as well as the monotheistic religious teaching for which he is famous, had already begun before he ascended the throne – indeed, his monotheism itself has been questioned. It has been said that the more permissive, peace-loving and internationalist values with which he has been credited are altogether illusory.

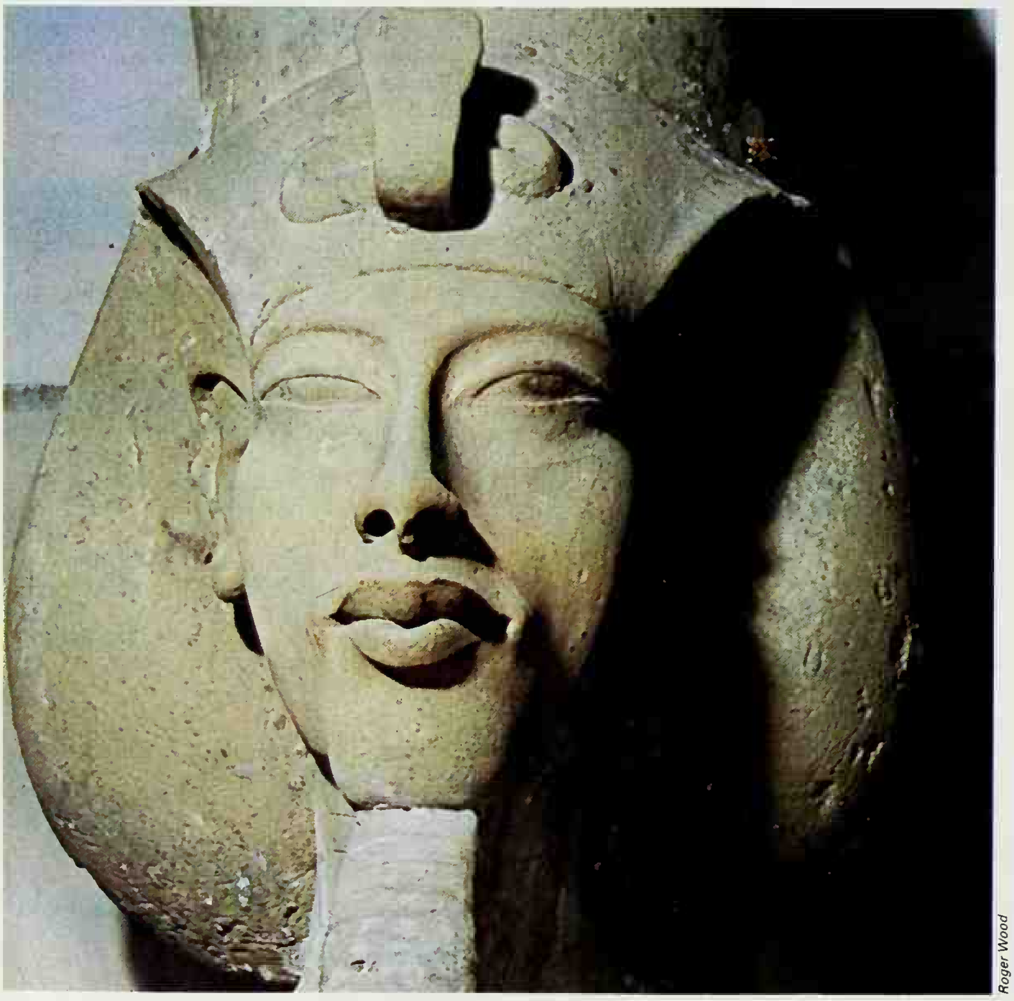
Though the new interpretations are partly justified, the greatness of Ikhnaten remains. Whether the force that drove him is called fanaticism, megalomania or will and imagination, there can be no question that this pharaoh, by his own genius, succeeded in changing the overwhelmingly conservative traditions of ancient Egypt. Looked at from the point of view of later human history, it can be seen that his changes were truly enlightened. The fact that his endeavour plainly contained the seeds of its own destruction turns drama into tragedy. No wonder that modern man has been stirred by his story – even to the point of intensifying and recolouring it.

Amenophis IV was the son of Amenophis III and Queen Tiye. His boyhood was probably divided between their great Malkata palace at Thebes and Memphis, the old capital, which kept its importance as a royal city. During his father's long reign of some 38 years, the New Kingdom attained its zenith of cosmopolitan opulence.

Problems With Dating

It is known that Ikhnaten's reign lasted for 17 years, but the problem is whether he was co-ruler with his father, Amenophis III, for several years before the latter's death. Some Egyptologists have maintained that Ikhnaten was crowned in his father's 28th year on the throne and consequently ruled beside him for 11 years or so. Others have doubted this, but in his recent and authoritative biography of the pharaoh, Cyril Aldred examines the evidence and accepts the co-rulership theory. He dates the reign of Amenophis III from about 1384 to about 1346 BC and that of Amenophis IV, or Ikhnaten himself, as running from 1358 to 1340 BC, giving the latter a maximum of six years of independent rule before his demise. The parentage of Ikhnaten's principal queen – the celebrated Nefertiti – is uncertain. She is hailed in an inscription as the 'Heiress, great in the Palace, fair of face, adorned with the double plumes, endowed with favours, at whose voice the King rejoices, the Chief Wife of the King, his beloved, the Lady of the Two Lands ...'

Nefertiti was closely associated with her husband in his religious reforms and adopted the extra name of Neferneferuaten, meaning 'Good like the beauty of the Aten.' Statues of her emphasized her physical



Roger Wood

Left **Ikhnaten identified himself with the supreme godhead and intensified reverence was required from his subjects. On the other hand, the pharaoh was no longer idealized in art but portrayed realistically. *Right* Egyptian stele showing Ikhnaten and Queen Nefertiti making offerings to the Aten, the solar disc from which emanate long rays, each ending in a beneficent divine hand**

attractions as a goddess of love. She bore Ikhnaten six daughters and seems to have enjoyed happiness with him until she died, perhaps in the twelfth year of his reign.

Ikhnaten had another much-loved wife, whose pet name was Kiya, and the Pharaoh also had sexual relations with his elder daughters and children by them, incest being the accepted method of perpetuating the royal line in Ancient Egypt. His eldest daughter by Nefertiti was later married to Smenkhare, an obscure figure who was co-ruler with Ikhnaten for a short time but survived him by only three years. Smenkhare was succeeded in his turn by the equally short-lived Tutankhamen, whose queen was another daughter of Ikhnaten and Nefertiti, and who is famous today for the astonishing quantities of treasures found centuries afterwards in his tomb. It seems that Smenkhare and Tutankhamen were the younger brothers of Ikhnaten and sons of Amenophis III – not Ikhnaten himself, as at one time thought.

Radiance of the Aten

The Thebes of Ikhnaten's youth was dominated by the city god, Amun. Linked with the royal sun god, Re, he stood for the unseen, creative solar force, and the wealth and power of his priesthood was very great. Probably under the leadership of the learned priests of Re at Heliopolis, there was a tendency to merge the divinities of Egypt's bewildering pantheon with the sun god. He was seen most often in the form of Re-Herakhty, compounded of Re and the falcon sky god Horus – who was Pharaoh (see HORUS). In one early text Re is the 'sole god who has made himself for eternity', and other deities appear as his 'bodies'.

It has been supposed that the development of solar religion during the 18th Dynasty may have been in part an attempt to return to the conditions of the Old Kingdom, when the solar cult of the northern city of Heliopolis gave Pharaoh unique power. This was part of a move by the crown and the northern priesthood to counter the near-hegemony of Amun. It is also suggested that the emergence of a new form of the solar cult, that of the visible sun disc or Aten (in which the spirit of Re was manifest) represented a compromise that could win new adherents.

There is no doubt that this growth took place. At their deaths several kings of the 18th Dynasty were said to have been reunited with the Aten; under Tuthmosis IV the Disc appears as a distinct divinity associated with the power of Pharaoh. In his father's reign Ikhnaten would certainly have witnessed a mounting concern with the Aten. By now the god had a cult centre in Thebes, and the title 'Radiance of the Aten' was applied to the state barge, the Malkata palace and probably even to Amenophis III himself.

Although these developments may have anticipated Ikhnaten's teaching, yet they were still only a slender growth in the forest of Egyptian polytheism – and at Thebes they were quite overshadowed by the great cult of Amun. Amenophis III built several temples to Amun and to others of the old gods. The break which Ikhnaten had to make to achieve an uncompromising monotheism was therefore in truth more revolutionary than evolutionary.

Already in the second year of his reign he was planning a huge temple of the Aten at Thebes. At this time the deity was still shown as a falcon or falcon-headed man crowned with the sun disc. Now the first great innovation was made. The human and bird forms were swept away – presumably for the first time ever in Egyptian religion – and instead the divine power was expressed by a disc bearing the uraeus of kingship and long rays, each ending in a beneficent hand. These rays stretched out to all and sundry, giving a new unity to every scene, yet they offered the *ankh*, symbol of life, only to Ikhnaten and Nefertiti. At the same time the king seems to have demanded a deeper obeisance from those approaching him.

This intensified reverence, so contrary to other trends in the royal life, can be explained in both theological and personal terms. The living Pharaoh had been one among the gods, the divine Horus. Now with one god alone, Pharaoh, too, became the sole divinity. The young king must also have felt complete identification with the godhead that had been revealed to him personally. On a boundary stone at Akhetaten he declares that it was his father the Aten, and he alone, who had shown him the site for this new city, and at the end of his famous sun hymn he says, 'there is none other who knows thee save thy son Ikhnaten. Thou hast made him wise in thy plans and power.' The same concentration on the divinity of Pharaoh is shown in the private tombs at Akhetaten. Where in the past the tomb owner himself would have appeared before Re-Herakhty, now there was only the divine Disc shining upon the royal family.

Temples Open to the Sun

After the adoption of the rayed disc, the next revolutionary step was the move to Akhemtaten (now El Amarna) halfway between Thebes and Memphis. Thebes was heavy with the old gods and their powerful priesthoods. The new god Aten needed his own residence in his own city. The site was probably first established in the fourth year of Ikhnaten's reign, and was ready for occupation two years later. It was in this sixth year that Ikhnaten finally changed his name from Amenophis.

The temples of the new city imitated that of the sun god at Heliopolis. In place of the dark sanctuaries of most Egyptian temples their courts were wide open to the rays of the Aten. The royal family must often have worshipped in them. As for the litany, it must have followed the lines of the marvellous hymn to the sun (see EGYPT).

The hymn hails the sun as a bringer of light and life to the world, which drives the night away and rouses all the inhabitants of the earth to joyful and productive activity. It is the sun which causes women to conceive, which quickens the child in the womb and the chick in the egg, which brings the Nile flood and gives life to the seeds in the ground. It is the god who made all the millions of forms that life takes and all manner and conditions of men and women, of all nations and languages and shades of skin colour – a novel inclusiveness.

The composition of the hymn is generally credited to the Pharaoh himself. It celebrates the Aten's eternal return and nature is shown rejoicing in its creator: vegetation burgeons and grows green, beasts gambol, fish leap and birds fly, raising their wings in the god's praise. The hymn uses accustomed phrases and brings together ideas often expressed in Egypt before, but significantly there is no mention of any other gods. The monotheism of the hymn is absolute.

Ikhnaten's teaching on the life after death is imperfectly understood. He had, of course, banished Osiris and his judgement of the dead. The sun hymn was inscribed in tombs, and its equation of night with death is suggestive. Pharaoh probably taught that through him all the dead could share in the solar resurrection.

The New Naturalism

Ikhnaten's ideas transformed not only religion but also art and the habits of court life. Until then, Egyptian art had for centuries always shown movement completely arrested; now it became an art of living movement. Where before Pharaoh had been idealized to the verge of impersonality, Ikhnaten had his own distinctive peculiarities provocatively exaggerated.

The formal public scenes gave way to the liveliest portrayals of the royal pair embracing, eating and driving out together, dandling their babies. Traditional scenes glorifying Pharaoh as hunter, warrior, trampler of subject races, were rare, at Akhetaten almost absent. The palaces at Akhetaten were bright with realistic paintings of the plants and creatures of the Nile. It would be foolish to judge these facts in the light of modern liberalism, but it is legitimate to see behind them a consistent mind and personality. Indisputably, they reveal a marked change from all earlier palace art, both in content and in style.

The inevitable negative side of the Atenist revolution is represented by the ruin of old temples and priesthoods, and the economic dislocation that resulted. Some authorities consider that it was only in his last years that Ikhnaten gave the command for all names of other gods, all words implying a plurality of gods, to be struck from the monuments. Possibly, opposition from the older priesthood had enraged Ikhtaten and led him to take such vandalistic action.

The closing events of Ikhnaten's reign have been much disputed, but his eventual successor, the youthful Tutankhaten, quit Akhetaten, then changed his name to Tutankhamen and busied himself with restoring the supremacy of Amun and the temples and statues of the old gods. With the coming of the 19th Dynasty in 1299 BC, Ikhnaten's name was obliterated and removed from the king lists, to be almost completely forgotten for millenia.

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FURTHER READING: C. Aldred, *Akhenaten King of Egypt* (Thames & Hudson, 1988).